1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

177 583 [192] vermilion on the bride at the door"), *duar bapla* ("door marriage"), or *Diku bapla* ("Hindu marriage"); henceforth it shall be referred to as *DB*. All these names call attention to the fact that in this form, as distinct from all others, vermilion is applied to the bride before the door of the bride's [192] house rather than the groom's. The term *Diku bapla* reminds one in addition that application of vermilion at the bride's house is the Hindu custom, while in all other forms of marriage it is applied at the groom's house. It also points to the fact that this form generally involves more Hindu traits than any other. Unlike the other forms, a proper *DB* requires the hiring of a Hindu band and dancers, and the performance, before the application of vermilion, of the marriage of the bride to a tree, a rite which is practiced by many neighboring Hindu castes. The *DB*, like other arranged marriages, allows the couple if they are mature to give or withhold consent before marriage arrangements are completed. Such consent is almost always forthcoming, for a Santal girl rarely dares to go against her 177 585 parents' wishes. Nearly all the inhabitants of both the bride's and groom's village are involved in the marriage ceremony and ensuing activities. A large party from the groom's village accompanies the groom to the village of his bride. Tradition requires his family to hire from some Hindu caste (usually Harijans or members of other castes of low status) a number of men to carry the groom on a palanquin to the bride's house; a Hindu dancing girl and entertainers ought also to be part of [495] the entourage. Today, if the groom happens to be a TISCO worker returning to his village to have a *DB* marriage, he may be borne by a hired taxi instead. One such worker imported • [533] for the occasion, a hired wagon equipped with a phonograph and loud speakers, thereby enabling his rural brethren to listen

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

585 to Indian cinema music in which the syncopations of "rock 'n
495 roll" were considerably in evidence.
• 533 The large number of participants in a *DB* not only gives
585 testimony to affluence of the families being united but is indicative that the marriage establishes a bond between villages as well as between kin and the couple. This broader social implication is borne out by certain obligatory acts in all marriage forms but is particularly conspicuous in the two highest forms.
585 In both of these forms the concern of the entire village is most
524 dramatically expressed in two rites which precede the marriage, i.e., the "scold the husband song" (*jawā eger sereñ*) and the "riddle song" (*episet' seren'*). The first of these rites, which is performed in the bride's village before the marriage rite itself, involves mocking the appearance, virtue, and wealth of the groom and his party and is done by the assembled village females. The second rite is led by a collection of village representatives (*mõṛe hoṛ*) which may include any of the married men of the bride's village. They halt the groom's party along the pathway to the bride's house demanding answers to riddles. It is made to appear that the groom's party shall not be permitted to pass if the correct answers are not forthcoming. On one occasion which I observed, the correct answers were not given, so that the groom's party could only move on by the grace of the village representatives and after being somewhat humiliated. It would appear that the type of riddles posed could not be divined without prior instruction in certain traditional knowledge. One hears such riddles as the following: "What is it that tied walks and untied sits and rests?" Answer: "When you plow, then you tie the bullocks, and you tie the plow to the yoke; if you tie them they will walk and you will chase them; when you finish, you untie them, bullocks and yoke." Or to give

2: Skrefsrud M-5 (1870-1871) 1942 AW42 Santal AW42

VII. CONCERNING PLEASURE AND JOY

181 S17 To forget care and anxiety we have pleasure and joy: Dancing, singing, drumming the dancing-drum and the kettle-drum, blowing the flute and the horn, playing the fiddle, folk-tales, stories and conundrums, hunting in the forest, catching fish, and beer drinking. Also metaphorical speech will bring pleasure; but this is to tutor people, we use it mostly in connexion with serious work.

a. Singing and dancing.

533 535 We have very many kinds of dances, and in connexion with the separate dances we also have songs. In connexion with dancing and singing we drum the dancing-drum and the kettle-drum, and we blow the flute. The names of our dances and songs are the following: lagṛē, dǫ̀ñ, gulugri, ḍahar, baha, riāja, bhinsar, jhika, humṭi, guñjar, sghrae, lǫbge, and duñger. Dances without songs: the sword dance, the Dom dance, and lgurig. And songs without dancing are: forest songs, marriage recitation songs, folk-tale songs, rice-planting songs, and dirges. We blow the horn, for pleasure, at the Flower festival and during the hunt without any dancing. We play the fiddle with all songs. We make the flutes of hollow bamboo, called bar langa bamboo. The horn we make of the buffalo-cow's horn and of the horn of the buffalo, and also of the horn of the Black Buck. The fiddle, they make of wood or of a pumpkin shell, and on this they put a string of catgut, only one, and having strung horse-tail hair on a bow they fiddle; on the hair of the fiddle bow they apply saiga[1] raisin; then only it sounds. The kettle-drum they make of an iron frame which they cover with buffalo skin. The dancing-drum they make with a cylindrical earthenware frame and cover it with skin of goats, etc.

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535 Lagṛē, gulugri, and humṭi they dance at any time, the flower dance only at the Flower festival; the sghrae, matwar, and guñjar dances they dance at the Sohrae festival; riāja and bhinsar they dance at the Karam festival; dǫ̀ñ they dance at marriages and at the Chaṭiar festivals; ḍahar they dance during the hot season, only girls; jhika they dance at the Chaṭiar, the Dom dance at marriages; and pǫk dǫn (the sword dance) and lgurig they dance at Sohrae and Sakrat, men only; lǫbge they dance at the Durga festival, and duñger they dance when they spend the night at the hunt.

[1] Suvendia Moniifera, Colebrooke.

hunt. The rice-planting songs they sing when planting rice in the rice-fields, without dancing; the folk-tale songs they sing sitting down during the hot season in the evening; and the forest songs young men and girls sing in the forest, and also during the Sohrae, metaphorically. Dirges they sing at the final funeral ceremonies; these they also call "crying songs".

Except in the sword dance, the lạuṛiạ, and ḍahar (road) dances girls and young men dance together in all dances. When dancing the girls take hold of each other's hands, and the young men dance in front of and opposite to the girls, without taking hold of each other. Some young men will dance themselves alone while drumming the kettle-drum; some young men will, while drumming the dancing-drum, dance together with those who drum the kettle-drum; some young men blow the flute and dance at the same time, and some young men only dance, and they sing together with the girls. Young men and girls enjoy dancing very much; they dance the whole night, and during day-time they work; still because of their joy they do not feel tired. The old men and women do not warn the young people not to dance, rather they go to look at them, and when they feel drowsy and go home, they say to the young people, as they leave: Do stop now, otherwise you will be drowsy when you have to work to-morrow. The young people answer them: Well, we are stopping presently. Still they continue dancing, until they are done for. While they are dancing the Jọg Mạñjhi does not stay there either, the young people are there alone right up to the end. Having danced until cock-crow they lie down just a little.

Elderly men and women do not dance the lagṛẹ̄ much, only now and then for a short while; but during the Chạṭiạr, the Flower and the Karam festivals they dance. Any one who knows the jhikạ, starts this, and they dance slowly and sing.

b. Beer drinking.

The real joy of old men is in the beer. When they have drunk themselves jolly tipsy, they start a thousand things, about the old country, about landlords and usurers, about dancing, singing and whatever it may be; then they laugh, they are rejoicing, they feel exceedingly well. If they become drunk, they lie down and sleep, and there is an end of their joy. Elderly women also drink a good deal. Formerly elderly women did not drink much, and young men and girls not at all. Nowadays all Santals drink very much, a great shame. Formerly no one drank from a brass-cup; they used leaf-cups; nowadays they pour brass-cup after brass-cup down; still they are not satisfied. Formerly they did not drink Suṇḍi[2] beer, only now and then they would drink liquor. Nowadays many Santals are becoming paupers by drinking Suṇḍi beer. If they have no money they take paddy

[2] Low-caste Hindus, who brew beer, distill liquor, and sell it.

2: Skreferud M-5 (1870-1871) 1942 AW42 Santal AW42

224 who shot the deer, him they give the hind half; and of the head they give him one split
[793] piece, of the spleen one split piece and of the liver one split piece. To the village priest
[622] they give the flesh on both sides of the backbone and a part of the liver, to offer to the spirits. For the village headman they take out one thigh as his part of the rump belonging to the killer, the village headman gets the upper part of this; what is below this his deputy gets, and the end of the leg the Gojet gets. And the kettle-drum drummer gets for himself a separate part of this. The remaining flesh the hunters divide equally among themselves, and for the men who did not go to hunt, they leave a little flesh, and this they apportion to them, house by house; this portion they call an extra share (*capo jore*). Of hares and peafowls the village priest has no right to get anything, neither has
[793] the village headman any right, nor have they any right to get an extra portion; of these
[622] only the one who shot gets his share, and the remaining flesh the hunters divide in equal portions among themselves. They who carry get the belly, of deer and of hares. This they call the belly for carrying. Of all kinds of birds the carriers get the gizzard.

The village priest wraps the flesh he is to offer up in a dry leaf and roasts it and offers it to The Five the Six, Pargana bayam, Mañjhi bayam, and Marsh buru; having offered it he eats the flesh.

The village headman has, by customary law, to give five half-seers of rice as a hunt bounty; this the hunters cook together with the flesh of the heads into a hash and eat. Thereupon they come to their respective homes with their portions. The shooter's rightful portion and the village headman's portion they carry along; the headman's portion they bring into his house, and the rightful portion of the killer of an animal into his house. They who carry and bring this, get beer and food at both places. In the house of the shooter they separate from his rightful portion the pot-flesh on the underside of the knee. This the sisters and daughters of the shooter get. However far away they may live, the shooter brings this to them and leaves it there, and these treat him to beer and food, and they look upon this as a great honour. His part of the head and the liver the shooter
[769] cooks with rice into a hash and offers this to the ancestors of his family.

g. Composing songs and the like.

538 Parables they have gradually composed, at different occasions. Taking up what has been seen they have composed them. If a person suddenly speaks and reveals this or that, then others, thinking that this is good and fitting, will also speak the same, and thus it is spread about. Folk-tales and fairy-stories are not composed nowadays, only old ones are in vogue, learnt one after the other. Riddles we have also only old ones. To mimic no
536 one is able to learn, only by having a natural ability people are able to mimic, to show the faults of people. The songs are mostly old ones; still they are now and then com-
533 posing a few new ones. Men have composed *riāja*, *matwar*, and marriage songs, and

2; Skrefsrud M-5 . (1870-1871) 1942 AW42 Santal AW42

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women are mostly composing forest songs, Sohrae songs, lagrē songs, and dgō songs. The forest-songs mostly divorced women compose, and they make girls their disciples, when they pluck vegetables and bring leaves. The young men learn these from them. Also among the forest-songs there are a very few ones that are good, otherwise they are only what is shameless; therefore they do not sing these in the villages or at home, and if they sing them here, people scold them. Elderly married women do not sing forest-songs, but foppish half-elderly women sing such in the forest together with the girls. By singing these also good people get their mind spoilt, and they are led astray. Remembering these, girls and young men also neglect their work, that is to say, a few, and when married, such people will not endure living together; they will be divorced.

2: Skrefsrud M-5 (1870-1871) 1942 AW42 Santal AW42

796
539

The dove is always on the move,
The crow is eating with legs spread out,
The young servant of the headman's family
To-morrow he will go out;
The servant girl of the deputy headman's family,
Later in the day she will come out.

At the cow-shed of people who have buffalo cows they sing the praise of these differently, when they perform the waving ceremony:

Whose cows are these? the cows are shining white.
Whose buffalo cows are these? the buffalo cow is black and bulky.

The cows of so and so, the cows are shining white.
The buffalo cows of so and so, the buffalo cow is black and bulky.

The leg of the buffalo cow is thick and fat,
The leg of the green dove is covered with feather low down.

These ones went to the Hihegor forest,
These ones went to the Manegor forest.

Do, you so and so, turn them round,
Do, you so and so, turn them round back.

In the Hihegor forest, mother, is the tiger,
In the Manegor forest is the young leopard.

These will graze making scratching sounds in the straw pins,
The saline soil you will clear quickly.

The young men finish blessing the cattle, and the girls also bring the waving ceremony to an end; thereupon they all wander in the village street and sing; they drum the dancing-drum and the kettle-drum, and blow the flute, that is to say, the young men do this and the girls beat the cymbals and dance, they make a tremendous din and noise. [533] [534]

At cockcrow the young men again bless the cattle once, and following after them the girls perform the waving ceremony. The young men sing[*]:

The cock has crowed,
It has dawned.
Get up, my son, to let the cattle out to graze.
Get up, my son, to let the cattle out to graze.

[*] Is corrupt. Hihegor.

Si Mukherjee O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

614

said to have guided the ancestor of the clan to water when he was dying of thirst in the forest.

Sank Sòrèn: — May not wear shell-necklaces or ornaments.

Barchir (?) Sòrèn: — Plant a spear in the ground when they are engaged in religious or ceremonial observances.

Bitol Sòrèn: —So called because their founder was excommunicated on account of incest."[1]

7. Tudu

The seventh clan, the Tudus, the musicians of the Santal legends, divides itself into the following sub-clans in Mayurbhanj (according to our information). [533]

(i) Koi or Kàità Tudu: — They abstain from *Kàità jhingà* (a cultivated plant, the fruit of which is eaten).

(ii) Hàndi Tudu.

(iii) Dandka Tudu: —A kind of fruit, called *Dada jhingà* by the Mayurbhanj Santals, is reported to be taboo to them.

(iv) Lat' Tudu: — *Lat*,' we have already seen, means a "roast inside a leaf-cover." About the origin of their taboo, we heard a story that while a woman was preparing such a dish in between two

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1. Ref. Risley, *People of India*, App. viii., from which these have been quoted.

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,5- (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

Procedure

In case of the *Daiban Bapla*, the party goes to a *Daiban* tree with the bride or bridegroom, while music goes on. The bride (or bridegroom) and the tree are then besmeared with turmeric paste and clothed with new cloths amidst *Itut Sindur* songs, while the bride puts vermilion on the trunk of the tree. A marriage on similar lines may be gone through with either a male or a female dog (in case of a bride and bridegroom respectively); but it must be performed in the courtyard of the boy or girl to be so married. *Matkòm Bapla* or marriage with a *mòhua* tree, requires that the party should go to a *mòhua* tree with *hàṇḍia* and new cloth. Thereafter, the mother of the bridegroom (or bride) applies turmeric paste on the tree and on the person of the bride-groom (or the bride). They then circle round the tree seven times amidst music and dances. 585 588

The procession then reaches the village of the bride. There, they are welcomed cordially and housed separately. Special songs called *Manduar*, (*Maṇḍwa* (?) temporary shed erected on the occasion of a marriage) sung jointly by both the parties follow a hearty repast, till the bride is made ready for the marriage. 585 [533]

As they advance towards the bride's house, a party of revellers obstruct them. They would not allow them (bridegroom's party) to pass on if the [524]

Jt Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

for a period in which offences are to be connived at, as there is bound to be a good deal of drunkenness.

On the conclusion of the preliminary *puja* at about ten a.m., the rice, fowls and rice-beer already collected, are offered to *Maraṅ Buru* and other deities. Thereafter, these are cooked together by the villagers, while the *Naeke* (priest) prepares a separate dish with the heads of the fowls (because he is a pure and chaste person). Now, offering the dishes again to the gods like *Maraṅ Buru*, the *Naeke* leads the community feast and is followed by the tribe.

Towards evening, the cattle of the tribe are brought to the *Goth* and their horns rubbed with oil. They are then let loose near the spot where the tribe has eaten, and the man whose cow chances to eat the *sal*-leaf plate used by the *Naeke* (priest) is considered to be a very lucky one and endowed with the privilege of supplying a pot of *hàṇḍia* (rice-beer) for the next year's festival. He becomes the hero of the tribe, to be blest with good cattle and harvest, and is raised over the head and shown to the assembly. Eggs are also placed on *sal*-leaves; but cows are not made to walk upon them, as we saw in the Santal Parganas.

The nocturnal vigil at Mayurbhanj is practically the same as that during the night of *Gohal Puja*, the same songs are sung, but they add many of an erotic nature. But fruits and vegetables as gourds

3t Mukherjea O, Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

up the broom-stick. Mòntènko takes up the bow and arrow, while Marañ Buru, the pick-axe ; and the actor-deities then run to the grove followed by the young men. Jahèr era then sweeps the shrine, while the two others supervise. 796

At night, they return from the grove. The priest, with piteous lamentations takes back the insignias the deities wore. All then sit on mats. The three actor-deities are then given a handful of rice each as propitiation, and questioned about the auguries. This is followed by a general incantation of the gods. [782] [787]

Next, the priest washes their feet beginning with Jahèr era. The deities themselves do so mutually, and the headman, the drummer, the *Kabi* (the singer), all participate in the ceremony. The balance of the water is then thrown on all, amidst general jumps and yells. The priest then asks for the water-pot, and makes Jahèr era, Marañ Buru and Mòṇṛènko sit on the mats, when they are dispossessed of their spirit life. They are then entertained with a meal of rice and drinks of *bàṇḍia* (rice-beer) along with the others present. But a peculiar thing is that the *Kabi* (the singer) is allowed a large share of the dinner and not allowed to return home.

Dances *en masse* with special songs for the Baha follow. Many of these are duets. One runs [535] [533]

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

796 533 [539] thus in the first few stanzas:—(*translated*).

Semi-chorus:

On the Pipul tree, the wood-pecker is twittering.
Under the banyan tree, the *gutrut* is singing.
Has the Spring arrived?

Second semi-chorus answers:

[539] The seasons have changed, so the wood-pecker twitters;
The Spring has come back so the *gutrut* babbles.

The Spring has come back to us.

796 [526] The second day's programme, which includes the shooting at *sal*-flowers, is the most picturesque. Early in the morning, the priest's wife grinds flour. The Headman's orderly goes round the village gathering rice, salt and turmeric. All then go to the Holy Grove singing all the way. The priest carries a big basket containing a chain, bracelets, broom-stick, bows, arrows and horns; and a smaller one with rice, oil, vermilion, flour and pick-axe. [778] A small holy-water pot is conveyed there by a bachelor youth.

Here, the actor-deities of the previous day are again inspired. They wear their traditional insignia and run to the jungles, followed by the young men. There, Mònrènko shoots at the sprouting *sal*-flowers with an arrow, Maraṅ Buru climbs the tree and cuts

3i Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

796
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The folk-songs sung on the occasion have an extraordinary naivèté of their own, and if we choose to note some of them here, it is because they will throw a flood of light on the observance of the festival. One of the songs, sung in the festival, would seem to show that *Pata* was formerly celebrated in water. This verse is as follows:—

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Pàhil pàhilko patakèda dak'
Talare khuṇṭi latarrè,
Radha còṛokko nàcurena.

Translation:—

In the first Pata festival, a post was fixed in the water. Under it a *Radha Còròk* (a swinging wheel) began to swing round.

Another song sings of the swinging wheel and cracks a joke about the *Bhóktas*, the devotees who are possessed by the spirit of *Pata-Boṅga* (the deity of Pata), and act their parts during the festival as if they were the gods themselves:

Barohat ḍaṅ[1] dada terohat khuṇṭi,
Ḍaṅ upòr bhòktago rahigel,
Bhòkta pujai mahasòy.

Translation:—

The *ḍaṅ* is twelve cubits long,
Thirteen cubits the post,

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1 The *ḍaṅ* is a big plank on which the devotees swing during the Hook-swinging festival.

3i Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

On the *dan* swings along,
(Sir) Bhòkta merrily tossed.

The joy of Santalia during such festivals knows no bounds. Large batches of men and women go from place to place. The men play on pipes. The women decorate their hair with beautiful flowers and entwine their arms round one another's shoulders. The kettle-drums, the cymbals and the wine, produce an atmosphere in which these simple people forget their mundane existence in the pursuit of their primitive practices and observances. The *joie de vivre* is reflected in the following song in which a woman requests her sister to accompany her to witness the *Pata* festival for three days to their heart's content.[1]

Cetan disòmrè pè maha jagròn pata hoyok' ;
Dara ge didi ge sòngè jaibò,
Pè maha jagròn sòbay jaybò.

Translation : —

In the uplands for three days they keep awake for the Pata ;
O sister, do wait for me, I shall go with you ;
For three nights they keep awake ; we all shall go.

1 Quoted and adapted from the author's article "Santal Folk-Poetry" published in the *New Review*, September, 1936.

Jt Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

539 of rice-beer and polish the big and little brass basins and make five or six leaf-cups and he would bring back some liquor and they would all have a drink."•

There is however a tinge of pathos in the story "Gowala's Daughter" where a childless woman laments, "My sorrow is that I have never worn clothes of dusty cloth." They met all her wants but yet she cried and cried. And when the puzzled parents asked her for the meaning of her enigmatic wishes, she explained that she wanted her clothes to be made dusty by the feet of children.

• 533 *Santal Folk-poetry*

Any one who delves into the folk-poetry of the Santals will be struck by the extraordinary simplicity and naiveté of their songs. For the new-comer to Santalia, they have a strange enervating appeal; others are half-afraid of them, as of the aboriginal songs of the African tribes in Metro's *Trader Horn*, with which many of these tunes appear to have a family resemblance. Closer acquaintance, however, reveals that these songs mostly deal with the joys and sorrows of the countryside, glorify nature in her beautiful manifestation of leaves and flowers, and occasionally crack a joke.

• Pages 368, 369, *Folk-tales of the Santal Parganas*, Bompas.

3t Mukherjea O, Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

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It is not generally known that the Santals have elaborate song-cycles for festive occasions like the *Sohrae* (the December Harvest Home), the *Baha* (the Spring Festival), the *Pata* (the Santal Còròk or Hook-swinging festival) and marriages. Over and above these, the sowing of the seed and the various stages of the different harvests are celebrated with special songs by the men and women of the tribe, amidst tribal dances and ceremonies. All these songs have their own tunes as the orthodox Hindu music, although Bengali songs and Christian hymns are sung with as much gusto as their original folk-poetry. This was brought home to us once, when we accompanied Mr. Gurudas Sarkar, a Santali scholar belonging to the senior ranks of the Bengal Civil Service to a Santal village near Dumka, Santal Parganas. And imagine our surprise, when we found that one of their songs was about a Christian preaching his message in the *Kulhi* (village lane).

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Religious and Semi-religious Songs

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We have seen before that the most famous Santal religious festival, the *Sohrae*, celebrates the December Harvest Home. A popular song of the festival is a duet between a husband and a wife.

[539]

Tune—*Sohrae*

Wife— Maraṅ burù sèndèra dò
Gòl gòltèm calak'a

3t MukherJea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
AW42 Santal AW42

533
539
796

Kiyà baha campa baha
Nàgudarae mè—hò màiri.

Husband—Nàgu màiriñ nàguam
Cal màiriñ catam
Cèkatèm bahaya
Cèkatèm baha mòsòda.

Wife— Niñ reak' bud màiri
Niñ reak' nakil
Càuric' reñ gutuya
Bohok'reñ baha mòsòda.

(Translation)

Wife— For hunting in the big hill (Paresnath),
You are whistling while going.
Keya flowers and Campa flowers
Bring for me—O my love.

Husband—I will bring, O my love,
And put them in your hand.
(But) How will you use them (dear)?
How will you fade them out?*

Wife— O (my) love! I am wise enough,
I am clever enough.
I will string them in the plait of hair,
I will entwine them in the knob of hair.

*Literally—Do you know the art of using them till they fade out?

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

533
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796

Another song, sung on the concluding day of the *Sobrae*, welcomes the visitors and describes the chronic agricultural distress:

Dèho durup'pè,
Dèho tèngonpè,
Jòmak' nunyak' bòeha banuk'taleya
Met' ñèpèl bòeha ahajibà.

Akal kèdac gateñ sawanek'edac
Ità rànu gateñ bale ñawana
Sanam hòpòniñ ko ḍingra cabayèn.

Kiminiñ hò kiminiñ
Kursà baha kiminiñ
Kiminiñ mòn gedò bàñ ñamlèt'.

Pai pàilàñ natacèkèda
Bàṇḍi hoṛoñ nalaekèt'
Kiminiñ mòn gèdò bàñ ñamlèt'.

(Translation)

Welcome, welcome! O friends dear!
(We have) neither food nor drink to offer,
But we offer you our greetings.
(It matters little whether) the harvest failed
or it was in plenty.
For want of seeds (and consequent want
of food)
All my sons have nothing of their own.

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

533 539 796

Look there at my daughter-in-law!
Look, how beautiful she looks like the *Kursà* flower;

But I could not win her heart.
To get her as a bride, I spent all I had,
But I could not win her heart.

796 533 538 In the chapter on "Cycle of Santal Festivals," we have noted an extract of a song singing the advent of Spring, during the *Baha* (Flower Festival). This festival has got an elaborate cycle of songs, many of which are not easily amenable to translation, being full of archaic Santali; but they contain poetry that is simple, spontaneous and fragrant of the "smell of Mother Earth." One sample taken from the first two stanzas of a duet, as given there, will give the reader a glimpse of the essential poetry of the Santals. Similarly, we have seen that the *Pata* (Santal *Cõṛòk*, Hook-swinging festival) has its own round of songs, and we have marked the *joi de vivre* as reflected in the song already quoted, (in our account of the festival) in which a woman requests her sister to accompany her to the "uplands" to witness the *Pata* festival for three days to their heart's content.

Marriage Songs

585 538 533 Marriage, always a fruitful source of poetry and humour, has produced a song-cycle amongst the

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

Santals. Our poetry-bag can be drawn upon to illustrate some of the customs and the corresponding emotions in the Santal bride and bride-groom.

A bride sings:

Niñ ñutum dò baba bargeŗe mad waepe,
Guric' mandere khunți bidme,
Niñ ñutum bàryatko hòr rege daram kope.
Niñren juridò natorege.

(Translation)

O father, build the canopy in the field (near the house, not in the court-yard).
Fix the post (of the canopy) in the cow-dung heap.
And when the bride-groom's party comes, meet them on the way (and make them return),
Because my (life's) mate is in the village.

Here is presumably a case of a girl being given marriage without her consent; a formal courtship being not always favoured by many parents now. Naturally, there are a number of unhappy marriages, and in the poem, we have just translated, the bride-groom is prescribed a humiliating reception because the bride's lover is already in the village.

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
AW42 Santal AW42

585
533
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Another song describes the marriage dances thus:

Cameda latarre mandewa latarre,
Lid lupur lidar lupur bàihàṛ ròṭè,
Leka meṛsa meṛsi.

(Translation)

They are dancing beneath the canopy
under the branch of the tree;
They are hopping up and down and cheek
by jowl, like frogs in the field.

In the following song, the singer addresses the caged-bird as to the time when the bridal party is expected to arrive:

Cetan disom khon niñidiñ
Darakan disadaram ben nasul
Miru, najani din coñ, najani ñindà coñ,
Pasen coñ dinman tala ñindà.

(Translation)

They are coming from the up-country to
take me.
O bird, do tell me when they will come?
Keep awake and tell me when they will come.
They might come in day-light or at night,
They might come at midday or mid-night.

3i Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

Here, a reference may be made to a humorous song about a bride-groom's party. 585 533 539

Cetan disomren sañge bàryàt,
Bare buṭàrebòn ḍeraket'ko;
Jomak' ñuniak' dò timinrècòñ
Bare hòñgòr hatar metakope.

(Translation)

We have a big bride-groom's party from up-country.
We have given them a resting place under the banyan tree.
It is not known when we can serve them dinner.
Let them in the meantime eat the banyan fruit.

Marriage ceremonies in Santal villages are red-letter days in the life of the women of the tribe. The following song expresses the joy that infects the life of the community:

Teheñge siñdo, teheñge ñindàdo
Matkòm gelere ñelerasa
Dose làiakope, ràsi nato kuṛi koṛa
Duko ñeljoñ ma
Matkòm gelere ñelerasa.

(Translation)

This day is a day of all days,
This night is a night of all nights.

Jt Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
AW42 Santal AW42

585
533
539

In *mohua* flowers there is honey.
Go and tell the youths and maids of populous villages;
Let them come and see
The *mohua* flowers are full of honey.

During the farewell between the bride and her people, some very pathetic songs are sung. The sample quoted below has almost a tragic touch in the separation :—

Beker beker yamgim janamlidiñ,
Konor konor yamgim haralidiñ.
Bàtire basañ dak'màlire sunum
Kòtò jòtònte yamgim haralidiñ.
Bam dayalenayo bammayalen,
Tala ñiṇdà minhun mèròm
Leka yamgim chutikidiñ.

(Translation)

As a babe you brought me forth on this earth,
You have reared me up in your arm (always);
With a bowl of tepid water and oil in a vessel,
With what a care have you reared me up!
O mother, where is your affection for me?
You are now sending me in midnight like a cow or goat.

We conclude the marriage-songs with another instance which may find a parallel in the final speech

31 Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

of Kanva while bidding farewell to his foster daughter, Sakuntala.

Hòpòn hòpòn gidrà kuṛi
Sitoñ lòlò din repe, idiekantiñ,
Eho chandoboṅga!
Jhipir jhipir dagme, purbarimil hoeme,
Rearayliñgmeho Cando boṅga!

(Translation)

My daughter is very young,
You are taking her when the day is hot.
O God, let it rain in drops,
Let the eastern wind blow and make cool (the journey).

Songs of love

As is only natural, a good deal of Santal folk-songs deal with the eternal reaction on men and women regarding matters of the human heart. In the following song, a man thus speaks of his love for a lame girl:—

Bururе siñarak' legec' legec' siñarak,'
Jibòn calak' rehoiñ sidgeya,
Natore kuṛi konrse kaṭa kuṛi[1]
Hiròm cetan rehoiñ agueya.

1. "Kònrse Kata" is explained in Dr. Campbell's Dictionary as "Side-ways." Many Santals in Mayurbhanj say it means a flower. In that view it will mean as beautiful as a 'Kònrse Kata' flower.

St Mukherjea O. Y-4, 8 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

533
831
539

(Translation)

Siñ leaves are soft and sway on the hill;
My life may go, but I must pluck them.
There is a maid in the village, she limps as she moves.
Though I have a wife, I must marry her.

The above has its exact counter-part wherein a woman sings of her love for a lame youth in exactly the same language with only slight variations:—

Bururе siñarak' legec' legec' siñarak,'
Jibòn calak' rehoiñ sidgeya
Natore koṛa konṛse kata koṛa
Hiròm cetan rehoiñ bòloygeya.

(Translation)

Siñ leaves are soft and sway on the hill;
My life may go, but I must pluck them.
There is a youth in the village, he limps as he moves.
Though he has a wife, I must have his love (even as a co-wife).

A second song refers to the dilemma a girl is placed into on seeing her lover at a distance:—

Gaten triyòy nòròñ buruma cetanre
Niñma dak'iñ lòlò jojo jharnare
Thiliñ bàgirema hoṛkoròtòra
Noṛakiñ ruàṛrema gateñ khinsok'a

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

831
533
539

Hòṛko ròròrbacha iñ sahaokeya
Gateñ kahis dòre bañgiñ sahaoke.

(Translation)

My lover is playing on his pipe on a hill;
I am gathering water from *laja*-spring.
If I go to my lover, leaving my pitcher here,
People will criticise me.
If I return home, my lover will be pained.
I can stand what men may say (gladly enough)
But I can never bear the pain in my lover's heart.

The next song presumably refers to a new attachment formed by a youth. Here the former sweet-heart of a girl is being addressed by her to get rid of his infatuation:—

Sedae sedae dò gate lañ tahènkan,
Sedae leka ror landa rorem ñamkan,
Ne kaira sakañ re maya redme,
Ne natu got' kam jònòm jònòm.

(Translation)

The friend sings:—

At first we were friends,
(Now) should you want the same smiles and talk,
Wrap the love in a plantain leaf
And let it drift in the current.

3i Mukherjea O. Y-4, 8 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
AW42 Santal AW42

831 533 539 The following song illustrates the truth that love does not distinguish between the high and the low:—

Namdò kisàṛ hòpòn nindòrengec,
Hòpòn ceka leka tem bulau
Kidiñ nalo sarim rag, sari nalo
Sarim hòmòra, bana horge conlan conlan soman geya

(Translation)

Girl:—

You are a rich man's son,
I am a poor man's daughter.
How could you charm me so?

Boy:—

Really, do not weep,
Don't feel wounded (my dear),
We both equal are.

Another verse describes the dawn of love in the heart of a man for his elder brother's wife, such marriages (*Dhâuilà sagai*), being permissible under Santal customary law:—

Candoe rakap' kan piric' piric';
Cabaganlañ boloyena,
Ghanem hili yan ghanem mela wañ;
Sati sakam do sakhi menay.

31 Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

(Translation)

With the radiance of the sun-rise, we are entering the tea-garden.

Now you are addressing me as elder brother's wife, then as something else;

But *sati* leaves are witnesses.

Here is a girl being questioned by her father as to where she had been so long:—

Yuminlòlo biṭi numin seton tokare,
Do biṭim tahèṅkana gaḍa rana kap'
Ròdò numul jiwir juḍásin duṛup' akan.

(Translation)

Father:—In this sun and heat so strong, where were you my child?

Daughter:—I was peacefully resting in the coolness on the way up the river.

Here is a love-song describing presumably a courtship:—

Dare numul ho tarasiñnenae sakam,
Binḍàhòṅ rahoṛena mense sariho,
Nañcardo naṛag me norok'ren hoṛko baḍae ket'lan.

St Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
AW42 Santal AW42

(Translation)

831 The girl sings:—
533
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The shade of the tree has changed to afternoon,
The sheaves of leaves have withered too.
In sooth I say, leave the skirt of my *sari*,
The inmates of the house have come to know of it.

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Love of Flowers and Birds

Nature with her wealth of beauties appeals very strongly to all primitive people and naturally enough, we find a large number of Santal folk-songs dealing with the flowers and leaves. Here is a Santal maiden enamoured of *natal* flowers which she will pluck at all costs and wear in her hair:—

Bururе *naṭal* baha
Dolop' dolop' *naṭal* baha
Janhan lekatchoniñ tiok'geya
Hòriñ chipirehon sut'do kòcerehon
Janhanlikarehoñ bahae geya.

(Translation)

On the hills are *naṭal* flowers,
The (luxuriant) *naṭal* flowers are dancing (in the wind).
I must pluck them by any means.
Although I am not so beautiful,

3t Mukherjea O, Y-4,5 (ca, 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

533
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824
[301]

And the knot of my hair sways side-ways;
However I may look, I must stick them in my hair.

In the following song, a Santal is wailing for the loss of his garden of flowers:—

Nadika dhare dhare amakar bagan Raghu fulakar bagan.
Fulakar bagan Raghu basate marilò.
Amakar bagan Raghu, hure marilò.

(Translation)

By the side of the river is my garden, O Raghu!
The garden of flowers has been despoiled by the wind, O Raghu!
My garden of flowers, O Raghu, has been blasted by the hail.

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Flowers in bloom have the strongest appeal to the Santals, more specially to their women-folk. It is a common refrain heard in the Santal Parganas "*Biti kande campa lagi, beta kande dhuti lagi*" (the daughter weeps for the Campa flower and the son for the cloth). Here is a party who would request the gardener for the *berdòr* flowers:—

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Maraṅ buru còṭre
Berdòr bahado jèṅgèt' jèṅget'.

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 6 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

824
533
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Malinañ mètaya baha lañ kòyèya
Berdoṛ bahado jèṅgèt' jèṅgèt.'

(Translation)

On the peak of the big hill,
Berdor flower looks deep red.
We shall ask the gardener for the flower.
Berdor flower looks deep red.

The next refers to the *towa* flowers:

Marañ buru còṭre towa bahako hese
Keda, niñlagit' do gochate nagueme,
Niñ karamḍàr lagit' dàhṛi lòṭòm.

(Translation)

A woman sings:—

On the big hill, the branches of *towa* flowers have been lopped off.
Bring the flowers for me tying them in the skirt of your cloth,
And for my flower-friend, bring them under your turban (so that none can see).

It is in an appropriate setting of natural beauties that shine in beauty:—

Kaira bali bhitàre
Gach dip dip kòre
Didi pat liplip kòre
Dara hara ghòrer bhitàre
Didi tiri liklik kòre.

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

(Translation)

824
533
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In the plantain garden
The plant glimmers;
O sister, the leaves quiver and quiver.
In a splendid mansion-like house,
The wife shines in her beauty.

Songs of Birds

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If the Santal folk-tales are replete with references to animals, the folk-songs have their share of the Santal's affection for birds. The following verse refers to white-paddy birds:—

Bandale bandale nàtiñ àkin bankdò
Bandale bandale pòsaò àkin beralidò;
Tòkoeraca natiñ àkin bankdò
Cuna raca natiñ àkin bankdò
Cuna raca pòsad àkin beralidò

(Translation)

In every *bundh*, a pair of white paddy birds peck food.
In every *bundh*, a pair of birds get plump by food.
In whose court-yard do the pair of white paddy-birds peck food?
In whose court-yard do the pair of birds get plump?

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

533 539 825 In the following poem a boy is pressing his mother to tame a pair of birds:—

Burucetanre kadañ gupi,
Sugasara cenrcniñ ciàakat' kin
Cara bànuk' babu, ţena bànuk.'
Sugà-sara cènrèn bàbulañ cekakinà.
Carayo iñgiñ àgui, tenayo iñgiñ benao.
Enrehon, sugà-sara cènrenyolañ àsulkinge.

(Translation)

Boy sings:

O mother,
While I was grazing buffaloes on the top of the hill,
I saw a pair of *Suk-sari* birds (there).

The mother replies:

We have no food to give them, no cage to keep them.
What shall we do with the birds, O my son!

Boy sings again:

I myself will bring food and make myself the cage (for them).
Yet, O mother, we shall rear them.

Other Songs

821 152 As an agricultural people, the hopes and fears of the Santals are knit up with the freaks of weather.

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

Here is a person consoling a Santal named Kisun, to wait patiently for a better day when the drought would be over and rains would shower to enable the corn grow: —

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Bilkema gele Kisun mathai hat dite Kisun
Kene Kisun kando?
Dhaner sis dada marigela
Matira chati phati gela.
Na Kisun kandore na Kisun bhabare.
Iswarer maya jadi hayta primthimite, jal jadi pareta,
Tumi Kisun khiti samara.

(Translation)

Why, O Kisun, are you weeping resting your head on your palm near the *bil* (lake)?
The ears of corn, O brother, have dried away,
The heart of the earth breaks (through the drought).
Don't cry, O Kisun, don't worry, O Kisun,
Should God will it and rains fall on earth,
You Kisun can reap corn in plenty.

Plenty of devotional songs are sung by the Santals in honour of the tribal gods. Here is one invoking Mònṛènko (the Fives):

776
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Mònṛènkodo mònṛènboeha
Ja Gosane turui kòdo turuiboeha

3s Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

776
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Mòṇṛèṇkoko ruia ḍhelka ḍemba
Ja Gosane, turuikoko naranaka sakaa.

(Translation)

(Men) The Fives are five brothers.
(Women) O, the six goddesses* are six sisters.
(Men) The fives beat on broad *demba* (musical instruments).
(Women) O, the six goddesses blow on horns.

178
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We think that here we may usefully quote a song reflecting reformist ideas so far as Santal religious practices are concerned. It is not definitely known if a Christian idea or the Sapha Hòṛ philosophy is being given expression to in the following lines, but anyhow we smell something new:

Num rakap kate naṛka sapha kate,
Dhòròm mundil teṅ bòlòyena,
Dhòròm mundilrè bòlò kate dhòròm puthi yiṅ parhaolet,
Hòrak dhòròmho ruaṛèna.

(Translation)

A man is presumably speaking to himself:
After bath and washing my hair with (the soapy) mud,

* The six goddesses are named, Dangi, Pungi, Hisi, Dumni, Chita and Kapra. They are all wives of Mòṇṛèṇko (the Fives).

3i Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

I entered the temple.
There I read the scriptures
And realised that the religion of the Santals
has come back.

We would like to conclude this review with a lesson conveyed by a folk-song :|

Sojhe hòrdò Nupàl kucit giya,
Ḍhili sili Nupàl balañ taṛam
Etòm koye Nupàl jànum jhànṭi
Janhan lekatèlañ bàkuk' kòk'a.

(Translation)

The straight road is narrow, O Nupal!
We must not walk carelessly, O Nupal!
To its right and left are fences of thorns,
O Nupal!
By chance thorns may prick us.

Santal Dances

Here we intend to mark in some detail, the various Santal dances, their nature and characteristics. These dances are mostly executed by men and women together, although, as we shall soon see, there are special ones reserved for either of the sexes. The Santals have special seasons and festivals for these dances and these are a part and parcel of the tribal religious life.

3t Mukherjea O, Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

women reply in chorus. So they go on till about 3 a. m. in the morning. 535

It must be added, however, that "Lagren" is a very stimulating dance, and on these occasions the youths and maids of the tribe get plenty of opportunities for love-making. Even the steps of the dance provide facilities for courtship, as the couples face side-ways and talk as they dance. And after the dances, parties in love retire into the woods. 535 832

The songs, sung on these occasions, are mostly love-songs. An illustration is given here:— [533] [539]

Nadiaka dhare dhare
Kahar bansi baje,
Hai hai òntare kandiche.
Akhite dekhini, kanetò sunini,
Hai hai, amar òntare kandiche.

(Translation)

On the banks of the river,
Whose lute plays?
Alas! the heart weeps.
I haven't seen with eyes,
Nor heard with ears.
Alas, my heart weeps!

Nabin Mañjhi, Headman of Muruda, Mayurbhanj, said that when there are no rains, there are certain "Lagren" songs in invocation to the Rain- 533 731 782 789 [115]

3: Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

533 731 782 789 [539] god, which are sung to make the skies yield rain. One such sample is quoted below: —

Svarager hur hur
Prithimite dhula chilu urilò
Dhaner sisò chilu marilò
Manuser chati chilu phatilò he.

(Translation)

In the sky, clouds rumble, Oh god!
On the earth, dust flies.
Oh god! the ears of corn dry up.
The hearts of men are breaking, Oh god!

Dòn ènèc'

535 [585] This is danced during marriages generally. Mixed men and women choose their groups and form a lively circle. The women interlock their hands gracefully, whereas, men with *Nagera* and *Madal* stand in the centre forming an inner circle. As the music continues, the dancers advance two steps to the right in a general motion. Next, they gracefully extend each feet forward. Thus they dance for twenty minutes or so, while women sing in unison. When the dance finishes, it is now men's turn to sing, while women reply in a musical chorus. This goes on for some time, when again the drums resound; the countryside echoes and re-echoes with a merry din and the dance starts afresh.

3r Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

535 long steps forward, and next they move back with two steps of a shorter nature. It is a fascinating sight to see the ebony beauties bending their bodies half, and swinging up and down with a graceful lithe motion like a field of corn before the wind.

533 535 The *joie de vivre* knows no bounds. Kettle-drums, cymbals and flutes fill the atmosphere with a jocund din, while the dance goes on for fifteen minutes with men singing and women replying in chorus.

Jàtur ènèc'

796 535 The time for this dance is the Harvest Festival (Sòhrae) and the Flower-Festival (Baha), when the village-priest offers oblations to the deities of the Holy Grove at day time. Men dance separately in a circle outside the circular female group. The dancers take two steps forward, bend the knees and gracefully raise their folded hands. Next, they turn two steps backwards and swing the hands up and down in a parallel fashion. So they dance on till the completion of the ceremonies in the afternoon, men singing and women replying in chorus.

796 782 535 This is a purely devotional dance, in course of which, the dancers salute the gods of the Holy Grove, because they have given the Santals a bumper harvest (as during the *Sòhrae*, December Harvest

31 Mukherjea O, Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

left, as they advance forwards. But when the circles swing backwards, it is with a brisk picturesque

Danta Musicians

movement that they do so. Thus they dance from early morning till mid-day, without any girls as dancing partners.

"Danta" is no independent dance, but is indulged in as a relaxation. Women do not join these dances, as they cannot skip sufficiently as the steps require, and more specially because the songs that accompany the dances are frequently too amorous. Many of these refer to women and a very decent one purports as follows:—

Some boys go to a tank; they catch fish, roast and divide. While they eat the fish thus roasted, they give all the bones to women.

Mention should be made of some special steps of the *Danta* and their probable significance. It is noteworthy that when the dancers in both rows

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
AW42 Santal AW42

535 832 change places and meet mid-way, they catch their hands and clasp them as is done by lovers in real life. And then they touch the various parts of the body and embrace as in a flirtation. These suggestive stolen sexual representations perhaps refer to the easy familiarities that the society sometimes permits between the husband's younger brother and the elder sister-in-law, (Ḍhàulià sàgài) and between the husband and his wife's younger sister. In making this suggestion, we are fortified by the opinion of an educated Santal.

[607]

Ḍahar ènèc'

535 [221] This dance takes place sometimes between the first day after the new moon of "Magh" (Jan.-Feb.) and the full moon of Falgun (Feb.-Mar.), beginning with evenings and ending with mid-nights.

Gay men and women form a circle with their hands entwined, the musicians standing in the centre. One sees the circle taking two steps forwards, and then changing the direction to the left with one step, and next to the right again with a single step. The circle thus moves on and on in the dreamland of a moon-lit night. Men sing and women reply jointly. And so it goes on for about ten minutes. After a short rest, teasing belles sing again. The circles are formed again automatically and the dance proceeds afresh, while the

[533]

31 Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

musicians display their skill to the admiring by-standers. 535

This is a religious dance and a prelude to the forthcoming Flower Festival (*Baba*). The songs are also devotional and refer to the deities of the Holy Grove. [533]

Baba ènèc'

As its name signifies, this is danced during the *Baba* (flower festival), when on the second day, men and women of the tribe go to the Holy Grove (Jahèrthan) to accompany the village priest, out to invoke the deities there. [796]

This is also a devotional dance, in which only women take part. They do not inter-lock their hands, form no circles, but proceed in a tripping marching order with musicians in a separate group. As they go on, men sing and women reply in chorus. It is picturesque to see the dancers waving their right hands upwards, up to the shoulders, which are swung down soon to be folded beautifully. When the right hand is raised, the right foot takes a step. Next advances the left foot, and the folded hands are raised up with a devotional beam in their eyes. So they go on till they reach the Holy Grove and thus dance round it thrice.

Baba is also danced when the village priest returns home with the flowers on the final day of the flower festival (*Baba*).

3i Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

177
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[262] 2. Carrion should not be eaten. The signatories refer to this custom with feelings of shame.

[535] 3. Santals should not dance or sing anywhere
[533] except in their houses or villages. The manifesto reminds the tribe that the Europeans, Hindusthanis, the eastern hill-tribes sing and dance, but they avoid the hill-sides and public places. The ancient Santals had no public dancing.

[593] 4. Force should not be resorted to without reason as it slackens the marriage tie and gives rise to various vices.

[291] 5. Santals should wear coarse cloth and their
[301] women should give up wearing glass-bangles.

During my last visit to Mayurbhanj, I found the air thick with these ideas, specially among the educated Santals and there was a noticeable tendency to give up dancing and singing in public. It became clear to us that aboriginal sets of value and philosophy of life were undergoing a perceptible change. Times are gone when the tribes joined with the rest of the population in their pujas and festivals as in the past. To a discerning eye, this ban has robbed the tribes of the *joie de vivre* to a great extent and the infiltration of political ideas plus a realisation of their rather poor economic life, has cast a pall of gloom even on the denizens of forests, hill-tops and wide expanses of laterite soil,

Bi Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

whom sexual intimacies are permitted or connived at in Santal customary law. There is a folk-song (quoted later) of the Santals, a Bir Sereñ (song during hunting) in which such a sister-in-law is explaining the mysteries of cohabitation to her novice husband's younger brother. Another song, also referring to intimacies with the elder brother's wife, perhaps records a second stage when the lad has become emboldened:

Koṛa: Dèsè hili ho koṛam toa te,
Tidò hili ho rakap' tiñ me.
Kuṛi: Tidò babu jaiñ rakap' ketamge
Pale babu ja sakòm saḍe tiñ,
Pale babu ja paini saḍe tiñ,
Pale babu ja dadam babu ja
Dadam babu jae dhòra laṅ.
Koṛa: Bàndi huṛu baṅse hili ho
Saika huṛu baṅse hili ho
Dadaiñ hili ho chindoè ñelà ho.

(Translated)

Boy: O, sister-in-law, do please put my hand on your breasts (on the chest) O, sister-in-law (please) raise my hand.

Girl: O boy, I could put your hand on my breasts,
But should my bracelets ring by chance?
If my anklets ring by chance?
If by chance, your brother catches us, O boy!
If by chance, your brother catches us?
(What will happen then?)

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

goes to show that girls now lose considerable freedom of movement. They are watched by their parents with care and are given companions while going to jungles to gather wood or to the *hats* for marketing. In support of the proposition that young girls are haunted by wakeful eyes, the following song may be usefully quoted here:—A girl sings:

Kidiñ tundañ lekayom horasien
Baha barge yoiñ bòlò lendò;
Hiliñ geto yoiñ eger kidiñ
Mone baric' yoiñ bòlò lendò.

(Translated)

(To look) Like a scorpion, I parted my hair;
I entered the flower-garden.
My sister-in-law rebuked me,
My mind became sorrowful, as my sister-in-law rebuked me.

As regards the age in which boys and girls receive their first sexual experience, the opinion of the Santals questioned on the point varied. Some put it at 14/15 years with boys who attain puberty, while for girls they gave the age at 12/13 "when the breasts ripen," as they put it. Others, put it at 16/17 with males and 13/14 with females. Two educated Santals questioned at different places stated that boys and girls receive their first experience at 10/12 and 9/10 years respectively.

3(Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

572 838 arising out of such ties and Santals are emphatic that there are no cases of homo-sexual aberrations.

836 In sex-life, unmarried women, divorcees and widows enjoy equal freedom with men to cohabit with men of their choice, barring of course the prohibited degrees of marriage and the clan rules of exogamy. But excessive cases are taken notice of [848] by parents and superiors, and if pregnancy results, village elders step in to find out the man responsible. Very frequently such scandals are avoided by a marriage between the parties.

837 The Santal hates adultery. If a married woman cohabits with others, she is taken to task by her parents and her husband's people. Generally, such erring wives are divorced by the husband. Serious crimes like murders sometimes result from such offences and we remember an educated Santal nonchalantly blurting out, "if my wife commits adultery, I shall cut her into pieces." The following 837 folk-song contains the news of such an illicit union • 533 being conveyed to a maternal uncle by his ne- 539 phew:—

Nephew: Eh mama, mamago, hatòmiñdo perkao akan.

Uncle: Nowa katha sakhi bhagna bin purao lekhan.
Hopon bohok're capò hòcòbin.

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

Nephew: Sunum jor dare* buṭare utar setmae boholede
Dakhin setmae jangaledę sardiyakat' mandre, manogo
Potam mamòkin rak'let.

The sense of the above may be given as follows:

Nephew: O uncle, O my uncle, my maternal aunt has become familiarised and taken advantage.

Uncle: You have got, O my nephew, to furnish evidence for this. You shall have to swear by placing your hand on your son's head.

Nephew: Under the shade of a wild fig tree, with head to the north and feet to the south, O my uncle.

They were cooing like wild-wood pigeons.

Human nature being what it is, it cannot be said that amongst the Santals there are no cases of extra-marital love. In the folk-song quoted below, a lad sings of his love for a married girl, who in her turn replies that she would renounce the marriage she had entered into:

Kora: Sisu relañ pirit lena, sisu relañ miluàlena
Namge miluà mayam charaoket'.

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* "Sunum jor dare" was explained by Mayurbhanj Santals as being the *Kul* tree, known in Bengal. Dr. Campbell, however, gives the meaning as "A species of wild fig tree, *Ficus Cordifolia*, Roxb."

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

837 539 533 Kuṛi: Nalo miluàm rag ase, nalo miluàm rò̤ ase,
Sindur lugriñ bhanduṛgiḍi bohok' sinduriñ koṭagiḍi.
Naṛho miluà nalañ dò sedac leka ge.

(Translated)

Boy: From childhood we were in love, from childhood we were united in affection;
You have now given up that tie of love.

Girl: Don't weep, my love, don't speak about it, my beloved!
I shall throw away the vermilion-cloth, I shall brush off the vermilion from my head:
We shall again unite in love as heretofore.

836 The cases, however, of unmarried boys and girls stand on a special footing of their own. The evidence at our disposal goes to show that the "dangua koṛa" and "dangua kuṛi" (unmarried boys and girls) are sexually free (barring the clan-exogamy and the prohibited degrees of marriage). Within this restriction they can commit any amount of "Lòṭghòṭi" (fornication) with absolute freedom, if opportunities are suitable.

836 539 533 A number of folk-songs can be made to illustrate the pre-marital romance between the boys and girls of the tribe. Here is a rich man's daughter asking

3: Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

a youth belonging to a humbler way of life to meet her in secret:

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Kuṛi: Kisàṇṛale mente babu ja,
Nale noṛak' cun dokta jomja koṛa bape hijuk' do.

Koṛa: Engam maire egerdoe
Apum maire roṛdoe oñatege bale hijuk' do.

Kuri: Engaiñgesepe lajaockan
Apuingesepe bòroaikan.
Siñgaṛ sanu reja babu seteṛope.
Bale kari mela horte capo capote capobòlòpe,
Enrehoiñ ja babu dhamak dhari
Sad do bachare bhangaokatimpe.

(Translated)

Girl: Because, we are rich, O my love,
You don't come to ours to take lime and tobacco.

Boy: Your mother rebukes me. Your father reproaches me. So, I do not come.

Girl: You are shy of mother, you are afraid of (my) father.
At half-past ten at night, O my love, reach here.
Do come crawling through the shed where young buffaloes are kept tied;
Take all these troubles to quench my love-appetite.

3s Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

836
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This is how a neglected maid sings:

Gai gupiko panja panja,
Gai gupiko bako dedèṛdò.
Kaḍa gupiko panja panja,
Kada gupiko bako dedèṛdò.
Hape hapeniñ sakòm lenge,
Hape hapeniñ sankha lenge.
Ròhòṛ gàḍià ḍheñka leke giñ
koyok' nocòpe.

(Translated)

I ran after the cow-herd boy, he did not commit coitus with me.
I went after the buffalo-boy, he did not cohabit with me.
When I shall make ornaments for my wrists,
When I shall make shell-bracelets for my wrists,
I shall compel glances at me like the crane (ḍheñka) at dried-up ponds.

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Some old Santals of Baldiha, Mayurbhanj, were not however disposed to concede to the unmarried girl equal freedom in premarital sexual intercourse with the boys. This handicap on the girls is undoubtedly an influence of Hinduism on the tribe; it appears from the evidence that the original institution of the Santals placed no such restrictions.

000 Whatever that may be, a sane admonition is now

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

832
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826

cally enough termed "Kadam Baha." (*Kadam* Flower, belonging to a large deciduous tree, *Anthocephalus Cadamba, Bth. and Hook f.*). The variety falling down a little may be termed "Atur nunu" (Atur = to hang down ; nunu = breasts) or "Dandka Jhinga" (Jhinga = a cultivated food plant. *Luffa acutangula*, Roxb.) or "Kaita Jhinga." Unusual ones, are termed "Hotot'" (A species of pumpkin, *Cucurbita lagenaria*) or "Laua" (Gourds). Small and undeveloped breasts are classed as "Putka" (A puff-ball, a genus of fungi, *Lycoperdon*). The wrinkled ones are called "Jòknòt' nunu."

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826

The lure of breasts in a body beautiful, forms the subject of many folk-songs. One is quoted below:

Koṛa: Ul bele hòṛṇò tam ho,
Bel siñjo toà tam ho
Noà hòṛṇò noà toà do
òkòè lagat coñ

Kuṛi: Nalo babu jam ròṛ ase,
Nalo babu jam rag ase.
Noa hòṛṇò, noà toà dò,
Noà dò am lagat ge.
Noa kacha, noa panci noa kodo
Tòkòc kocòkò oyo aṭet'hò.

Koṛa: Nalo mairem ròṛ ase,
Nalo mairem rag ase,

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

832
539
533
826

Noà kacha, noà panci,
Nalaṅg ge do laṅ oyo atet'hò.

(Translated)

Boy: Your body is radiant like the ripe mango
Your breasts are like two *bel-fruits*,
For whom is meant your body (for enjoyment), for whom the breasts?

Girl: Don't, O boy, don't speak about this.
Don't weep, O boy, for this.
This my body, these my breasts,
These are only for you meant.
This loin-cloth and this sheet,
Who will wear round and use?

Boy: Don't, O girl, don't say like this,
Don't you weep, don't you weep, O my girl,
This loin-cloth and the sheet,
Both of us shall use.

The other song in our collection refers to the changed condition of the breasts of a girl. It appears that two unmarried sisters used to sleep together in the "pinda" (outside verandah of a Santal house). The younger sister sings that due to the elder's persuasion, the size and appearance of her breasts have changed:

Am khàtir tege dàina piṇḍaredòlaṅ gitic' akandò,

Bi Mukherjea · O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

832
826
533
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Serha lekan toa dàina pàilà lekaen.
Onatege rup dàinà raput' cabayen.

(Translated)

For your sake, O sister, we two sleep in the outside verandah.
My breasts (that looked) like the 'serha' measures, O sister, have become big like 'pailas';
Our beauty, O sister, has got shattered and disappeared.

Presumably, the physical appearance has undergone a curious change as a result of having lovers at night. [832 826]

In sex-attraction, it is a glimpse of the breasts that leads to intimacy amongst Santals. These have their primary appeal in dances like the Lagre*n*, when the two sexes mix together and their hands are joined. As the dance proceeds, the man gets warm- and looks for a response from the girl-partner. He presses the wrists with a careful carelessness. If she presses in return, the man's elbow will frequently touch and press the woman's breasts. The understanding being thus complete, the girl now turns to her friends and complains of headache or of a tired knee, the man similarly offers an excuse and off they retire to some cover of leaves, away from the dancing party.

31 Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

experiences of a deeper character amongst the Santals in affairs of the heart and no better illustration than the following folk-song could be found in support of our contention. In this song, a sister-in-law is explaining the nature of love to her husband's younger brother:

Koṛa: Pirit, pirit, pirit, hili ho,
Pirit do hili ho, láiñ mase ho.

Kuṛi: Pirit do babu ja bange bugiya
Jaha tinrem uihar lekhan
Uihar lekhan gedò mèn*t*' dak' jòròa.
Harta akat daka babu ja,
Daka babu ja bange jòmòk'
Jaha tin rem uihar lekhan laṛa
Akan ub babu ja bange suduk' do
Ahai akat thili babu ja bange dipilò.
Pirit do babu ja, bange bugiya.

(Translated)

Boy: Love, love, love, O sister-in-law!
What is the meaning of the word? Do tell me.

Girl: Love is not a good thing.
When one thinks and thinks of love,
The eyes shed tears and tears.
Before one is food, O boy,
But he finds no relish for meals.

3t Mukherjea O, Y-4, 6 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

831
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When I remember (him), I cannot tie up the loose knot of my hair,
The knot is loose, I cannot bind it.
I fill up the pitcher and place it on my thigh,
But I feel no inclination to put it on my head,
O Love, my dear boy, is not a good thing at all.

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A second song refers to a lad and a lass who cannot marry, as their parents like the Capulets and the Montagues were in enmity. They are out to leave their village for an unknown destination in the rainy season and come across a river in full-flood. The girl sings:

Cet baisakh neṇḍa babu ja,
Asar san japut' relañ noṛòk akan do
Làuṛiàdo cet lañemaya?,

The boy replies:

Nam reañ rupa sankha, iñ reak' ṭòḍòr
Làuṛiàdo lañemaya, enrchò bidesh telañ òḍoñ calak'ge.

(Translated)

Girl: We appointed a time (for elopement) in Cet or Baisakh,
During Asar and Sravan rains we two have come out.
What fare shall we pay to the ferry-man?,

31 Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1952
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

Boy: The silver ornaments on your wrists, 583
the bracelets of silver on my hand, 533
We shall give to the ferry-man; even then we 539
two shall go away to foreign countries.

The Dawn of Romance

It may be interesting at this stage to record the evidence of a middle-aged Santal, who in reply to our questions gave a detailed description of the dawn of love and its working in the hearts of Santal boys and girls, although, we are afraid, there will be some overlapping in the treatment of the subject. 832 836 [124]

He said, "The first thing that a Santal boy and girl have when meeting together is, what is called, "Bepengeee kusi" (the meeting of the eyes, *Cokshu Priti*, as termed in Sanskrit). Being thus attracted by the eyes, they have two or three glances when they arrive at an understanding. The boy wants to meet the girl who could fascinate him thus." He corroborated that a medium is now selected by the boy, being either his grand-mother, elder brother's wife or an aunt, real or by village-courtesy, and presents are conveyed with his messages of love. "The meeting," he added, "may take place at dances like the "Lagre*n*," when the infatuated youth goes behind the circle where his beloved is dancing and stretches forth his right hand forward, [602] [535]

3t Mukherjea O, Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

now says, "So you threw it. Why did you do it?" 832 836

The boy replies, "I meant you no harm."

"Why did you throw it? Tell me."

"I have something to tell you."

"Speak, what you will."

The boy then feigns and mumbles, "I have got a disease. Without you, there is no remedy."

"Name me the disease."

"You know it well enough."

At this stage they seem to know things well enough. The girl may prolong the ostrich shyness for a time. The boy makes his declaration. The girl replies that the spot is not a convenient one and may suggest a more suitable one and appoint a time, for she is ready. Thereafter, they seek opportunities and meet together to have their love-adventure.

Jungle-love

Love-adventures in jungles form the subject of a large number of folk-songs, called Bir Seren. Many of these relate to escapades, first sex-experiences and their results. These will dispense with the necessity of heaps of evidence to provide a correct perspective of the sex-life amongst the youths and maids of the tribe. 83 533

Jt Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

833 In the following song, we come across a girl
533 almost mad in her youthful ardour for love, offering
539 herself into the arms of a young man:

Kuṛi: Dare umul ho achuren dò,
Sakam binda hòn rohoṛen dò
Dese miluà aṛakaiñme.

Koṛa: Alo mairem ròṛ ase,
Alo mairem rak' ase.
Kuṛi koṛa laṅ ñapam àkan
Nanwan sagaṛ[1] pàṭi[2] leka laṅ
Thokao jalada.

(Translated)

Girl: The shade of the tree has moved away,
The sheaves of leaves have dried up.
Please leave me, leave me, O my lover!

Boy: O girl, don't say like that.
O girl, don't weep like that.

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[192] 1. Sagaṛ—"A solid cart-wheel, a cart having solid cart-wheels without iron tyres." Dr. Campbell.

[192] 2. Paṭi—"Each of the outside planks of the solid wheel of a Sagar." Dr. Campbell.

31 Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

(We) a boy and girl. We have united (in love). 833 533

(As) a new cart-wheel mingles into a single block, 539

By hammering and hammering, we shall be one (in consummation).

The thrill of the girl after her coitus, is thus expressed:

Kuṛi: Disom disom pirit babu ja
Pirit babu jaiñ tahèṅkan dò
Am leka do, babu ja banko dhaṅkuc'.

Koṛa: Disom disom miluà mairiñ tahèṅkan do.
Am leka do maire bako ṭaṇḍa.

(Translated)

Girl: In many places, I enjoyed coition, O my boy.
I cohabited in many places, O my boy.
Like you, O my boy, none could shake the loins (so well).

Boy: In many places, I enjoyed coition, O my girl,
Like you none could straddle so well.

Jungle-love has its repercussions and these have produced many folk-songs. In the following song,

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

833 a girl is explaining to her sister-in-law what happened
533 to her while out to pluck leaves:
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Saru bir sakam hèc'ñ
Dukàn hili ho.
Hèndè sañsoṛ biñ do hili ho,
Biñ do hili hoc jòtèt' adiñ.
Jhaṛ tenhòn jhaṛni tenhòn
Biñ bis do aṇṛgona,
Dangua koṛa bis do hili ho
Chekate aṇṛgona.

(Translated)

In a jungle called Saru, out to pluck leaves,
I went (there), Oh, my sister-in-law!
A black serpent of the *Sansor* kind bit me,
O sister-in-law!
By charms and incantations (O my dear),
Men take away the poison of snakes.
How can one, O my sister-in-law!
Overcome the poison (injected) by an unmarried youth?

Most possibly, the girl in this case has become enceinte as a result of her escapade in the jungles.

833 In another song, the girl pleads that she was
839 forcibly taken by a lad and she herself was
533 innocent:
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Hatom hatomgoi ho ho kèdo
Baṅe hatomgo añjom lèt'do.

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

Ladeya baṛe latarte kubuṅ kubuṅgoi idikidiñdò, 833
Ladeya baṛu latarre picirrategoi deṛkidiñdo. 839
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(Translated)

O my aunt! O my aunt! I shouted aloud!
You did not hear my call (at all).
He placed me on his arms, bent me double (dear),
Took me where the banyan (tree) bends,
There where the Kusum (tree) bends,
He made me straddle my legs and coition had.

In the following song, a ravished girl is being scolded by her mother on seeing her condition:

A mayo dea dhuṛi ñèl tegem rak' utaret',
Samaṅ senem ñel lekhan ciṛerakap' ciṛeangodo.
Bare bare biṭi maṇa ket'me ñiak' mana biti bam ajamlet',
Ni toda cet'iñ cekame.

(Translated)

Daughter: You have wept at the sight of the dust on my back
You have not (yet) seen the condition of my front, O mother!
It has been raptured both up and down.

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

833 Mother: Times without number, I admonished you, O my daughter!
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539 You did not care to listen to me, my dear,
What shall I do now?

We shall conclude this topic with a folk-song about a gang-rape. It so happens that when a girl is a confirmed flirt, she may rouse the passions of several youths for coitus with her. But as a matter of fact she may be simply playing with their hearts. Such a girl excites the revenge of the disappointed suitors and they combine together to rape the girl. Such cases are rare now, but that they occurred in the past cannot be doubted. In this song, a lad is requesting his sister-in-law to save him from the case of such a rape he had committed with others:

Koṛa: Mañjhiko chatkare cili hòṛko durup' akan
cet'do hili ko durbar kan?

Hili: Basè babu jam, bajhau akat' basè babu
jam baḍae akak'
Manjhikoik' huḍiñ kuṛi feḍ bulukò rapur
akade,
Pale babu ja namhòm mesage.

Koṛa: Namdò hilire nayoleka, dadaiñ hilire napuiñ
leka,
Janhan leka abo oṛak' kuk'li hilikò heic'
lenkhan,
Namdò hilire leiakome nale koṛado bagu-
aemesadò.

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1952
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

(Translated)

Boy: In the headman's door from the court-yard to the village-lane,
Who are the men sitting there? What is the case being tried?

Sister-in-law: Don't you understand, O boy! don't you realise, O boy!
The Headman's young daughter's thigh has been sprained:
Did you, O boy! mix with them (who broke her thigh)?

Boy: O sister-in-law! you are like my mother,
My brother, I look upon as my father.
Should anybody come to our house and ask for me,
Tell them please, "Our boy did not go."

Erotic Approach To Intercourse And Its Nature

Generally the Santal husband is the first to retire to bed. The wife follows him. Upto the birth of children, a *khatia* (a stringed bed-stead) accommodates the couple. The man places his hands on the breasts of the woman. The body meets the body. A good deal of dalliance is indulged in while the love is fresh and these include kissing the cheeks (not the lips), scratching, pressing the

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

the woman also shakes the loins when she experiences the thrill of coitus.

At this stage we may quote the folk-song (referred to already) in which a sister-in-law is explaining to her husband's younger brother, the posture how to effect coition:

A boy sings: Dèr dèr ko men hili ho
Cet' leka ko dèr koà ho.

Hili replies: Jaṅga talarre durup' kate,
Ètòm janga kòñiye bulure,
Kòñiye jaṅga ètòm bulure,
Dòhò kate koṛam toare capokate
Bai baite ḍaṇḍa babu ja hilaume.

The sense of the song may be thus rendered into English:—

Boy: "Coition, coition," men say, O sister-in-law!
How do they do it? How do they effect coition?

Reply: Sitting on the ground between the feet,
With right leg on the left thigh,
The left (leg) placed against the right (thigh),
Pressing the breasts on the chest,
Gently, gently shake thy waist.

This is the invariable posture adopted by the Santal during coition as the most suitable. Intercourse by lying side by side is seldom resorted to except by drunken people, too tired to adopt the

Jt Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

833 sitting position; and the process, lip to lip, breast to breast in "passion's golden purity" is not known to the Santal.

As regards the preliminaries to the final coition prevailing amongst the Santals, we have mentioned that they scratch, bite and kiss. But these are done, according to the Santal, so as not to inflict pain. We enquired whether they avoid kissing the lips [515] owing to the foul smell coming out of mouths. But we gathered that the Santals are very clean as to their dental hygiene; for, from their fifth year upwards they make it a point to brush their teeth with *neem* or *sal* tooth-sticks. So foul-mouth is not a factor. Moreover, the very position adopted in coitus does not permit of kissing the lips. The [533] folk-songs are silent as to such kisses to our knowledge.

831 The Santal discusses sexual matters including coition quite normally and naturally. During our investigations we found men, old, adult and young, answering our questions without any embarrassment and while talking about these things themselves, they evinced as much of detachment as if they were talking about the weather. But there are certain 831 exceptions. There are grades of relationship with 602 whom Santals cannot have sexual talks, *viz.* Maraṅ Baba (Father's elder brother), Mama (maternal uncle), father's and mother's sister. The permissible

B Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

224 782 In the alternative, the hunters may simply ask the Headman to invoke the Hill-god to look to the welfare of the tribe during the hunt.

224 834 784 As regards special rules to be observed before the hunting, it may be noted that men who will hunt, sleep separately from their wives and do not have sexual intercourse on the night previous to the hunting. On the day fixed for the excursion, the hunters do not apply oil on their heads or eat meat or fish or come in contact with women who have menstruated whose very touch is thought to defile the food or the clothes of the hunters.

224 [515] When the hunting party returns to the village, the feet of the hunters are washed with great delight by the women and oil is rubbed on the tired legs. All these conclude with the customary [576] salutations called *lohor* and *do god*, the former being adopted by women who are superiors in age and relationship and the latter, being a prostration by the juniors.

224 693 533 539 We would like to conclude this short review with a folk-song which describes the agony of a Santal wife while her husband is out hunting:

Baba hak najòmcò.
Baba sòbòd na jòmcò.
Baba lota dak' dògo sepeindaramlet.
Bàhu nalòmraga, bàhu nalòmhòmòra,
Bàhu hòpòn badal go bàhu hòpòn menak'ko.

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1952
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

224
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Baba heo haracò, baba hòbòr haracò,
Baba nunko tuluc' dògò baba nohoiñ reben len.

(TRANSLATED)

Daughter-in-law: Father, the sound of (returning from the hunt) perhaps I hear.
Father, the sound I hear perhaps.
Father, I am standing at the front-door with a pot of water by placing it on the palm.

Father-in-law: My daughter, don't you weep. Do not mourn (my girl).
My daughter, I have got a son, your husband will be changed for another of my son.

Daughter-in-law: Father, I have reared him on my lap,
Father, I have embraced him, while (he was) a child.
Father, I am not ready to accept him.

OTHER HUNTS

224 [431]

The *Bababaske Sendra* follows the method of the *Deshua Sendra* but there is no *Gipitic'*. A specialty is that the Headman is presented with a *kulai* (hare) or *tur* (squirrel), who, in return presents a pot of rice-beer. The *Iarpa Sendra* is a hunt on a smaller scale by members of five or six mouzas.

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

checks the free passage of an air current. The note produced can be varied within harmonic limits by the action of the lips. The Santals have string instruments also. In their instrument only one string is used which is of gut. The frame-work of it consists of a box-like resonator, hollowed out and covered with goat skin. This goat skin is fixed to it by means of small pins of bamboo. The string is attached at one end to the neck and at the other to the distal end of the resonator. The string has a tuning peg and a wooden bridge for regulating its tension. The dancing-drum (Tumdak) has a slightly conical body of burnt clay; the body is covered with patches of strips of bullock-hide wound tightly round it; both ends are covered with skin, the broad end generally with bullock-hide, the narrow end with the skin of goat. Both ends are laced with strips of bullock-hide, stretched from end to end close together. These strips make the instrument much stronger, and they are placed close together to prevent the clay body from being easily touched The ends are given a rim of boiled rice spread over the surface in circular form, often painted black with a red and white ring outside. The Tumdak is carried over the shoulder in leather thongs, the broad end always to the left side. It is drummed with the hands, the broad end with the left hand and the narrow end with the right hand.

534 [533]. [237] [323] [237] [531] [482]

Dancing :- The Santals love dancing very much and every evening the boys and maidens gather on a reserved open space in front of Jog-manjhis house for dancing. Males and females both dance together, though at times they dance separately. The maidens during dancing smooth and adjust their long hair and

535 [301] [302]

535 fix flowers in their coiffure and over the ear. The males
[80] also tie peacock's feather on their foreheads. I am now
[302] describing the dancing of the maidens which I saw
[114] personally in front of Katikund bungalow, which is fifteen miles from Dumka. The maidens stand closely in a line in order of height. They then fall away sidewise to form a big semicircle, limbs all moving as if they belong to one creature. They move forward two or three steps and in the same fashion they move backward and at the same time they make a circular
• [538] movement. The dancers in the ring sing songs all the while to the music of the flute. Three or four men take their stand in the centre of the ring, beating Tum tum and semi-circular drums furiously.

796 **Dancing during Baha festivals** :- Their dancing at the
535 time of Baha festivals is different from that described above. They stand in a line the tallest first and the shortest last, then they bend down and each one raises and lowers both hands. In this way they move forward
[533] two or three steps and again come back. As above the dancers in the line sing songs, drumming and fluting goes on all the while.

535 **Dancing in which both male and female take part** :- Both maidens and youths decked with flowers and peacock's feathers hold hands so that the breasts of the girl touch the back of the man next to her, going round in a great
[533] circle. The dancers sing in tune to the music of drums and flutes played by the musicians in the centre of the circle.

857 **Games**:- In old days there was more play and less
178 work for Santal children. But now-a-days they have to go with their parents to the fields and do their share

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

854/755 When a child is attacked with any disease, the parents become restless and call in the Raranic (Herbal doctor) or the Ojha (Shaman) for curing him.

593/123 **Illustrations**: In the course of my tour in the Santal Parganas, in Godda Damin in the village Sundarpahari, a man one day requested me to see his son who was suffering from some disease. I went there and saw that the mother of the child held him on her lap. The [763] child at that time was pale and anaemic, and the very sight showed that he was in a dying state. In the evening of that very day I heard the child was dead. I at once went there and saw a very pitiable sight. The mother held the dead body fast in her lap and would [533] not part with it, cried loudly and gave vent to her feelings in the following lamentation song[1]:

[539] "Jare jare dullarya tingdo, ardo okate tahenkan tinyia
Indig men keda lengegimenai tingia
Haire haire dhon tingdo akarbo
Tine dine jom leda
Jara jare dullarya tingdo okakoreye suroh baraikan tingia.
Indigo menkidaing jahan beret ketingya".

(English Translation)

"Oh me! oh me! my beloved one
Where art thou now, my darling.
I said to myself all is well with me
Alas, alas, my treasure, how short a time thou wast with us.
Oh, my beloved, oh, my beloved, where hast thou found a place ?
I said to myself he will get well again
Ah me! ah me!"

1. E.G.Man—Sonthalia and the Sonthals, London 1867.

4: Biswas D, E-3,4 (1931-1945) 1956
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

At the time of parting after marriage the mother of the girl sings the following song which shows how strong is the affection of the mother towards her daughter[1]:

"Dash manse kukhi may rakalom,
Baro manse danda may rakalom,
Ebekaise rakabo madiya,
Duyar rahilagigelare thesh,
Dosh manse kukhimmay rakhalom,
Baro manse dandamay rakhalom,
Ebekaise rackabo madhiya yayokera,
Mayakoise chhora Bore.

Utho dhanichala dhalga yuth,
Dhanichals dhani ghorge,
Chala dhani yuthi chali jay,
Tilamaka tandi purbhu ghora,
Jhinilage yayokera,
Mayakoise chhora Bore,
Baba hipaoyalaug mutha bhari,
Taka oyajo bhayahi paopalang,
Sursingya barada, mayahin,
Paoyalang kanchura kapra jore.

Muth bhari taka paoya yudali,
Jai gel surasingya baroda gada,
Shota jay gelo, kanchura kaprajo,
Chhitali jay gelo, matha bhari,
Sindura jo jonome jonome daybhel".

[1]I. E. G. Man—Sonthalia and the Sonthals, London 1867.

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

(English Translation)

593 "For ten months I kept thee in my womb,
585 For twelve I had thee on my waist,
539 How can I keep thee now ? Oh, my daughter,
533 The house is up to the door full of people.

(*Chorus*)

For ten months I kept thee in my womb,
For twelve I had thee on my waist,
How can I keep thee now ? Oh, my daughter,
How can thou part with mother's affection.

Oh mother, for pity's sake do not leave me.
How can I leave thee ?

Get up my daughter and begone.
On the Tilayaka place stands the rich man's
horse saddled and bridled,
Oh my darling mother, how can I leave thee ?
My father has received a handful of rupees
and a long horned bull
Mymother has got a striped dress
The handful of rupees is spent, the striped
dress of my mother is worn out
The tall-horned bull died in the bathing place
My head is marked repeatedly with the red paint
I am signed for ever and ever"

683 I now cite an incident in which it can be seen how
593 the father is attached to his sons and daughters—for
159 the son's sake the father murdered his own mother and mother's sister.

It was alleged that Malta lost a son and a daughter who died of fever some time before the murder. Suspecting that his mother was a witch and

St Culshaw M-5 (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

175 648 669 [538] [533] a great stir throughout the Santal country. The story has become part and parcel of the consciousness of Santals everywhere, and the leaders are still celebrated in songs that are current far from the places in which they performed their exploits. The rebellion had no direct connection with the Sepoy mutiny. Both risings did, however, originate in the unsettled state of the country and the inexperience of the British authorities. The Santals rose against the intolerable rapacity of the moneylenders, with whom the subordinate officials of the government, and particularly the police, were in league. It became necessary to call out strong armed forces to restore law and order before the grievances could be redressed. The rebellion followed a pattern one might expect when ill-armed rioters faced armed and disciplined troops. The Santals gathered, sometimes numbered in thousands, and proceeded to plunder the nearby bazaar towns. In the first flush of indignation and excitement they sought out their enemies, murdering police officials and moneylenders, as also other hapless individuals who came in their way. The alarmed government dispatched strong military forces to the area and proclaimed martial law. The disturbances dragged on in sporadic fashion for over two years, at the end of which the constructive measures of the government began to take effect. A new district was set up with special regard to the need for protecting the land of the Santals, and their village system was used in the organization set up for maintaining order by giving a measure of responsibility to their tribal officials.

175 648 [423] Since that date the history of the Santals has been peaceful and some measure of progress has been achieved. It was not however, until the second decade of the twentieth century that the Bengal Government passed an Act—the Bengal Tenancy Amendment Act, 1918—which endeavoured to protect Santals and other aboriginals in Bengal in similar fashion. It prohibited the transfer of land from aboriginals without the permission of the courts and prevented the attachment of their lands for debts arising out of causes other than the non-payment of rent.

175 426 648 423 By that time most of the damage had been done, and consequently the Santals are now overwhelmingly in the position of under-tenants. The background of their economic life can be seen in the following example, which is typical rather than peculiar. In 1896 the villagers of Ramboni borrowed the sum of forty rupees from their landlord in order to excavate an irrigation tank on their land. In the year 1913 they were sold

St Culshaw M-S (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

They have no memory of ever having possessed the institution, but a snatch of song once heard suggests that they did at some period abandon it. In a *Sohrae* song occur the words

> The young girls are sleeping in the girls' house,
> The young men are sleeping in the young men's cowshed.[1]

If, as seems likely, they once had such an institution, it is probable that the *jogmāṇjhi* and his wife were in charge. At some festivals the young men sleep at the house of the *jog māṇjhi*, and at the time of the *Sohrae* they go to him at the beginning of the festival and ask him in formal language to turn a blind eye to any of the faults they commit during that time. He is also called in to investigate allegations of immoral behaviour. The appointment is for life and it is hereditary, like that of the headman. In every village there are also two priests, who are responsible for maintaining right relations with the unseen world, but it will be more convenient to deal with their functions at a later stage.[2]

The humblest of the village officials is the *godet'*, the bailiff and messenger of the headman. When a child is born or a villager dies, it is the *godet'* who carries the news to all the houses. If it becomes necessary to summon the men of the village to a council to announce the near approach of a marriage party, or to collect dues from the houses for a feast in connection with a festival, it is the *godet's* duty to see that it is done. He is the errand boy, and consequently something of a butt for the wit of the village, as the following song (sung during the *Sohrae* festival) bears witness:

> Here comes the headman walking slowly,
> And here comes his deputy with wooden sandals,
> And also the *godet'* calling out to everyone.
>
> Put out a woven bed for the headman to sit on,
> Put out a wooden stool for his deputy,
> And put out for the *godet'* a broken bed.
>
> Pour out for the headman the first brew of beer,
> Pour out for his deputy the second brew,
> Pour out for the *godet'* the leavings.
>
> Give to the headman cakes of sifted flour,
> Give to his deputy some coarser cakes,
> And give to the *godet'* the lumpy bits.[3]

[1] See Appendix B, No. 1.
[2] See Appendix B, No. 2.
[3] See Chapter 7

St Culshaw M-5 (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

different kinds of rice fields are Bengali. Maize, a cereal that is important in their economy, has a borrowed name, but other lesser cereals retain their Santali names. In Bankura the Santals have lost the use of their own numerals beyond seven, though apparently these are known and commonly used elsewhere. Even so, in Bankura the Santal word for "twelve" is still used in phrases connected with the recital of tribal traditions, as in the phrase *gelbar paris*, meaning the "twelve clans". Iron has a Santali name, but other metals now in use, such as lead, copper and brass, have Bengali names. In addition to brass and earthenware utensils, the Santals make extensive use of the leaves of the *sal* tree (Santali *sarjom*), which they plait to form many varieties of plates, cups, pipes and cigarettes, and they possess a wide vocabulary to distinguish between the different kinds. Brass and earthen pots they buy from others.[1]

The difficulties of determining the extent of their borrowings in the field of religion may be illustrated by the fact that the language of spells and of prayers offered at the time of sacrificing contains a strong admixture of Hindi-Bengali words. This would seem to indicate that there have been many borrowings at this point; but it is also possible that the one who makes the prayers, wishing to put himself into a favourable relation with the spirits, uses a special vocabulary and so removes himself from the common run of his people when he is acting as a mediator between them and the spirit world. Many of the songs sung nowadays are composed in Bengali. There is a large stock of riddles, some of which are asked and answered in Santali, others of which are asked and answered in Bengali, while yet others make use of both languages.[2]

Only incidental reference has been made to the impact of Moslem culture on Santal life. Reminiscences occur of the period of Moslem rule, such as the following statement: "Concerning the *Turuk* (*Turuk*, or Turk, the name by which Santals refer to Moslems), it is said that they ruin our spirits because they cut the throats of fowls the wrong way. If we eat

[1] Another discussion of the linguistic evidence, giving many examples, and the whole stated from a somewhat different point of view, is to be found in Professor Sten Konow's introduction to Bodding's Collection of Folk-Tales.

[2] In a suggestive article published in *Africa* for June 1946, Professor F. C. Bartlett has expanded his thesis in the Julian Huxley lecture of 1944 that each primitive culture displays both "hard" and "soft" points. The methods which he has outlined for determining, in the examination of any particular culture, what constitute the hard and soft points, and in particular the story method, may furnish valuable results when applied to the study of Santal culture.

St Culshaw M-5 (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

over a wide field, involving inheritance, marriages and instances of indiscipline. Members are allowed to appeal against decisions made in village councils. Punishments inflicted range from outcasting to fines, and crude punishments are sometimes exacted on the spot, as in a case of a youth who had transgressed the rules of behaviour towards a woman relative with whom he was not in a joking relationship. He was compelled to drag his nose along a line of urine provided by the village headman whose authority had been flouted. The hearing of cases continues till the small hours of the morning and the discussions appear interminable, with accusation and counter-accusation, the calling of witnesses and references to tribal law and custom. It is, however, one of the great educating and cementing institutions in the life of the tribe. It is known to them by the name of "high court", a name that has been naturalized in most Indian languages. It is also called the *sendra duṛup'*, the hunt sitting, and the *lo bir duṛup'*, the burnt forest sitting, the latter name being due to the fact that the hunt takes place when the undergrowth in the forest has been burnt to help the fertilizing of the soil.

Meanwhile, when the evening meal is over the young men gather in another part of the clearing and spend the night in revelry. There is much strong liquor in evidence. In some cases the place of meeting has become the site of a government liquor shop. The dances, of a class known as *doŋgeṛ*, are men's dances, and the songs, known as *bir*, or forest songs, are men's songs. They are frankly coarse and deal largely with the physical aspects of love, courtship and lust. Many of the songs that are sung on this night are never sung by the Santals in any mixed company, or, indeed, at any other time, a fact that indicates among them a standard of delicacy in sexual behaviour which certain modern schools of thought appear at times to deny to primitive people.

Towards morning some of the folk, young and old, rest for an hour or two of much-needed sleep, but when the sun has risen they take some breakfast and begin to disperse. They make their way to their own villages, hunting as they go; but on this second day the proceedings are apt to be unexciting, for they do not find much to kill. By late afternoon the men are home again with their spoils, and when these have been divided they work off their fatigue in sleep.

The supposed monotony of the struggle for a livelihood is broken by so many devices of nature and of man that it is

CHAPTER 4

DANCING, MUSIC AND POETRY

THE word *rąską*, meaning "pleasure", is often on the lips of the Santals, and it is dear to their hearts. They turn from their difficulties and sorrows to find solace in one or other of the many ways in which they can experience *rąską*. Among these dancing is one of the most important. Their word for dancing is the same as that used for the play of children—*enee'*—and dancing is indeed the play of the tribe. In every village there is a dancing floor, an open space that is well cared for. At festival times it is swept and freshly plastered with cowdung by young unmarried girls, and when it is not in use for dancing it is the place where the young men gather in the evenings to discuss their affairs and interests.

Some of the dances are connected with particular festivals, and they are performed only at those times or during the whole of the month in which the festival takes place. There are other dances that are suitable at any time during the year. Some are dances for women alone and others for men alone, while in a few both men and women dance. The chief element of variety is introduced by means of varying the rhythm; to the casual observer most of the dances look the same. A group of men or of women dance together, forming a line with their arms linked, stepping sideways or forward and then backward, keeping time to the beating accompaniment of the drums, moving either in a circle or from one side of the dancing-floor to the other, and from time to time breaking out into song. Whenever there is an occasion for rejoicing there will be dancing. It is much in evidence during the celebrations and ceremonies after the birth of a child or at his fuller reception into the tribe, and again during marriage festivities. The general type of dance on all these occasions is known as *don*, which has within it many variations. At these times it is the women who do the dancing, while the men furnish an accompaniment with drums and flutes, and many of the songs refer directly to the purpose for which the folk have gathered together. During marriage ceremonies the *bapla*, or type of dance specifically associated with marriages, is also in evidence. The *doṅger* is the dance of the men on the night of the annual hunt. It is a wild type of dance, when there is much leaping in the air. Two of the young men stripped of clothing dance about in front of the lines, and the

5: Culshaw M-5 (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

decorated with paper streamers. One of the songs sung to the accompaniment of the *buan* is in honour of the instrument itself and recounts the birth and growth of the gourd on the manure heap. Some of the dances enact hunting scenes and fights with bow and arrow.

BUAN

During weddings and festivals the dancing takes place at night as well as in the daytime. Drink is plentiful, and the dance goes on until the moon is setting and the first light of morning appears in the sky. At these times dancing is associated with romance as well as with illicit flirtations and unions; amid the general rejoicing it is easy for couples to slip away unnoticed. Dancing, however, is not by any means confined to the more formal and set occasions. During the hot season in particular there is an almost nightly gathering in some part of the village, when the younger members of the community dance together. At these times the *lagre*, a simple dance, is much used. Of this there are many variations, and different varieties appear to be popular in different localities. One of the most popular in the area is a variety of *lagre* known as *porob*, which appears to be unknown elsewhere. These dances are suitable for any occasion.[1]

Santal music is largely but not entirely associated with dancing. The Santals are a musical people and find in music an outlet for the emotional and imaginative sides of their nature. From an early age boys begin to play on a whistle, the high and plaintive notes of which can be heard coming from the fields and woods as the boys tend the herds. Later most of them become proficient in playing the flute. The name *tirio* is used to denote different kinds of flute as well as the boys' whistle. Flutes contain six holes, and the usual type is the true flute that is held to one side—the instrument associated with Krishna in Hindu mythology. Some are beautifully made. One man playing at Sarenga during the Lakshmi Puja had a beautiful specimen; at the higher end there was a brass figure of Krishna playing the flute, while at the other end there was mounted a brass dove. Another type is shaped like an inverted T, the air being blown into the base of the T, while the arms,

[1] Bodding's *Dictionary*, Vol. II, p. 331, lists thirty-one dances.

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 43]

St Culshaw M-5 (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

not learn to play any of these instruments. Young girls may be seen sometimes trying out their brothers' instruments, but they put them away with childish things. Their singing is, however, their peculiar glory. Not only do they sing while dancing, but on many other occasions. As the women of a village return home in the evening from their visit to the weekly market or after a day of gathering leaves in the forest, their high- and soft-toned singing can be heard coming over the fields. During the transplantation of the rice seedlings they sing as they bend over their task. Their songs during this activity are of a special class known as *hephel'*, a word which means the plucking of the seedlings and weeding. Men also sing, and when one is narrating the traditions of the tribe or relating a story he will often break into song to illustrate a point or amplify the story. Santal melodies are as a rule pitched high and in a minor key. The range of the tunes is meagre and rarely makes use of more than three or four different notes in the scale. One unfailing characteristic is a long-drawn-out succession of repeated single notes at the end of each line. Nevertheless, they afford scope for the expression of the dominant emotions experienced by the Santals, whose devotion to dancing and song has developed among them a high degree of musical aptitude. In order that they may easily and quickly memorize the great number of different rhythms with which they have to be familiar, they have invented a series of mnemonics which they repeat at the opening of a dance or a song. One example of such mnemonics, associated with the *doṅ* dances, is as follows:[1]

"Bhendaṅ netaṅ | dak' taṅ netaṅ | din dupuṅ | din dupuṅ—
bhendaṅ netaṅ | dak' taṅ netaṅ | dak' dupuṅ | dak' dupuṅ."

[1] Bodding's *Dictionary*, Vol. II, p. 113.

St Culshaw M-5 (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

DANCING, MUSIC AND POETRY

Poetry, like music, has to a great extent developed as the handmaid of dancing, though, again like music, it covers a wider range than the songs sung to the accompaniment of dancing. Much has been done in recent years to collect some of the wealth of poetry among the aboriginals of India.[1] A comparison would probably reveal that the store of the Santals in this respect is second to that of no other tribe in India. A great deal of the poetry is spontaneous in composition and therefore ephemeral. They delight in turning out new songs, and those who possess special gifts of song-making are not slow in exercising them. These new and topical songs give poetic expression to some new experience of the group. The coming of the railway was celebrated, as in the following *don* type of song:

In the bazaar at Calcutta
The B.B. line carriages have fallen on the rails.
Send news to the Santals of Siuri,
Bring them here.
With a *hir hor khir khor kupi kol*
B.B. line train carriage *ho*,
Push it up once more.[2]

The beauty of a town lit up with electric lights did not escape notice in this snatch of a *lagre* song:

In Asansol
The electric lights
Look sweet, sweet.[3]

Love songs cover a wide range of expression, tender and passionate, as the following examples may serve to illustrate:

A *lagre* song[4]

The birds of the forest are crying,
They cry with different songs, love;
The fish cry softly, love,
My soul cries for you.

[1] W. G. Archer's *The Blue Grove* contains translations of Oraon poetry. *Folk-Songs of the Maikal Hills*, by Verrier Elwin and Shamrao Hivale, and *Folk-Songs of Chhattisgarh*, by Verrier Elwin, come from Central India.
[2] See Appendix B, No. 3. [3] See Appendix B, No. 4.
[4] See Appendix B, No. 5.

St Culshaw M-5 (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

• 533
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At the four corners of the pond
Varied coloured birds have built their nests;
Some are on the wing and some are seated.
They cannot find their nests, they cannot find their nests at all.

porob[1]

Why went you to the water, my girl,
Why did you run away, my girl?
What, O mother, shall I say,
What, O mother, can I tell you?
In Rajaram's garden
The flowers are blooming;
In the flower shrubs
Have I been caught.

Sometimes in the songs there is an expression of the pathos of life and a haunting sense of the unknown and the unpredictable:

lagre[2]

The water has risen in the river;
O Bhagavan, help me over, help me over.

jhika[3] (a men's dance)

The life of man 'tis like a *jhinga* flower.
For what did you come into the world?
What will you receive but misfortune?
At the end Krishna will have you.

Here is the cry of a child in a harvest song:

In the corner by the plantain tree who is there?
In the corner by the plantain tree is the potter,
In the corner by the plantain tree is the potter.

You in there, potter, you turn the wheel;
My mother and my father have I none,
My mother and my father make for me.

[1] See Appendix B, No. 6.
[2] See Appendix B, No. 7.
[3] See Appendix B, No. 8.

St Culshaw M-5 (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

533 539

I will make them, child, make them I will,
But the breath of life I cannot give,
But the breath of life I cannot give.[1]

Song and verse also serve to keep alive the memory of the past. Some refer to the dim past that comes within the scope of mythology and relate to the early days of the human race, as in this *Dāsāĕ* song:

Where, O *Guru*, were cows first born
Where, O *ccla*, were men first reared?
In Hihiri, O *Guru*, cows were first born,
In Pipiri, O *ccla*, men were first reared.[2]

Other songs keep alive the memory of more recent events, like those that commemorate the Santal rebellion. Others refer to local happenings of a past time, such as the following:

A *jhika* song[3]

There came to the yellow lake
Monilal Raja *ho*,
There came to Chaturpuri
Jadob Siń Rani.

Have you heard, Durjon Siń,
Raja of Tuń land?
Fight, fight,
Tighten your belts.

538

Poetic forms of expression are ingrained in Santal ways of thought, and appear not only in songs but in different kinds of rhythmic prose. The recital of the traditions brings out clearly the musical quality of the language used. This is true also of the formal conversation between the parties at marriages, in the marriage sermons and in the invocations to spirits. Here, indeed, there is a certain amount of rhyming, a device that plays but little part in the songs. Their speech is shot through with figurative allusions and they are fond of talking in riddles. A fourteen-

[1] See Appendix B, No. 9.
[2] See Appendix B, No. 11.
[3] See Appendix B, No. 10.

St Culshaw M-S (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

539 she found that it tasted very sweet. She called out to the Golden Vulture: "Here, Old Man, how sweet this human flesh is!" The Golden Vulture replied: "Whatever are you saying, Old Woman? I cannot understand you." Then the Moustached Vulture explained: "This child's brain stuck on my bill, and when I tasted it I must say that I found it very sweet." The Golden Vulture said: "I do not believe you, Old Woman." Whereupon the old woman vulture said to him: "Then have a taste, and perhaps you will see whether I am telling the truth or not." The old man vulture then put out his tongue and took a taste. A small piece of the brain got into his mouth, and the Golden Vulture said at once: "H'm, quite true; it is very sweet." The two of them proceeded to pick at the child and completely ate her up.

From that time vultures began to eat human flesh; they used not to do so before.

539 The above story, which is based on what might be called
• 533 the "Sakuntala" *motif*, is well known in the area. A slightly different version relates the story of a boy who was born at the foot of a plantain tree. It used to be told in the villages by a blind beggar, and a part of the story would be sung in verse. Some of his songs are translated here:

In the Toregor tank, in the Bahagor lake,
My mother gave me birth,
My father carried me in his arms.

North, south, east and west, black clouds have risen;
I am an orphan from my birth.
Where, O mother, can I go?

I leaned against a horse-radish tree, but the sap fell down;
I stood in the shade of the eaves,
But the water dripped on me.[1]

After singing this song, the beggar was wont to break into a different melody and refer to his own condition:

Alas, alas! the sun; alas, alas! the moon.
The gift of life you gave me,
The gift of sight you denied.
Give me a handful for my stomach,
A little rubbing oil to keep me alive,
A wanderer I through all the countryside.[2]

[1] See Appendix B, No. 12.

[2] See Appendix B, No. 13.

St Culshaw M-S (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

539
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The same beggar used to sing a song that referred to the second version of the story:

At the foot of the plantain she gave birth,
With leaves of the *ashan* she covered me.
Vulture, vulture, the Golden Vulture,
Vulture, vulture, the Moustached Vulture,
They brought me up.
O mother, give alms.[1]

[1] See Appendix B, No. 14.

St Culshaw M-S (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

We also say that if we urinate in a standing position the Flower spirits will be pleased. For this reason, if anyone sees us urinating in a standing position and scolds us for it we reply: 'We are making offerings to the Flower spirits!' The Flower festival is for flowers and fruits what the offering of new rice is for rice. Until the priest has placed flowers in the hair of the women and eaten some of the *matkom*, no one will wear flowers or eat the *matkom*. From the new year until after the festival the priest has to live very carefully. He eats nothing in other people's houses, because others may have been on a visit to villages where the festival has already taken place and then he might eat something that is forbidden. One of the songs that is sung when the priest is being escorted to the grove and again back to his house refers to the fact that the Dol Jatra festival of the Hindus has already taken place.[1]

'The Dol is over now, maidens, the *Pata*[2] comes next;
You must buy shields, maidens, for yourselves.

In the maidens' pubic region is the black bee's honeycomb;
You must buy shields, maidens, for yourselves.'[3]

The second great festival is celebrated when all the harvest has been gathered in and there is plenty of food. The Santals say that for one month after the Harvest festival, known as the *Sohrae*, they eat rice without measuring it. Although it may be held at any time during the period between the dark night in October-November and the middle of January, in most of the villages of the area it is now celebrated at the earliest possible date, when Hindus are celebrating the Kali Puja. One reason is to enable those who are migrating for work to share in it before they depart, and some of the villagers distinguish between this fixed festival and a true *Sohrae* fixed in the traditional manner. In a bad year a Santal remarked: "This year we shall have no *Sohrae*. There has been no harvest, so what would we eat and how could we invite our friends?" The words were spoken while the village in question was actually celebrating the festival at Kali Puja time. Further, the celebration of Kali Puja amongst the surrounding cultivator castes, and especially the Bauri, has many features in common with the Santal cult, particularly with reference to cattle worship, and this factor has undoubtedly led the Santals to approximate the time of their celebrations to that of their neighbours.

[1] See Chapter 7, p. 190.
[2] See Appendix B, No. 20.
[3] The hook-swinging festival.

St Culshaw M-S (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

58 852 been a second marriage, and as they were extremely poor their plea to set up house together had been allowed and the marriage celebration that had been postponed was indefinitely suspended. The time came when they wished to arrange a marriage for their eldest son and they found themselves involved in a difficulty. Until the formal celebration of their own marriage had taken place their son could not marry because in its absence they could not carry out the *caco chaṭiar* of their boy. The problem was solved by going through one of the permitted forms of marriage themselves, after which on the same day they performed the initiation of their three sons. They were scolded by the villagers who gathered for the occasion, but again pleaded their poverty.

852 574 The whole of the population of the village is invited for the ceremony, and each person must at the very least be given two cups of beer for each child on whose behalf the ceremony is being held. The feast for the whole village is not practicable except for a very few, and it is regarded as sufficient if the village officials are presented with a meal of rice and meat or chicken curry. If possible, the midwife who presided at the birth of the children bathes them in the courtyard by pouring water over them; and if she cannot, this is done by one of the old women present. [538] [624] Water is also sprinkled over the assembled guests. The *jog-māṇjhi* recites the myth of Santal origins; beginning from the account of the creation of the world and the founding of the clans, he brings the story up to date by leading to the birth of the children in the particular family with which the villagers are at [535] that moment concerned. Then there follows a dance in the courtyard, and songs are sung in honour of the family. The event [533] is neither preceded nor followed by any period of instruction. [184] Such materials as exist for comparing the institution in different parts of the Santal country suggest that possibly its observance is of greater importance in the north, particularly in the Santal Parganas. Bodding has described the ceremony, basing his 114 852 account on the published Santali account of the traditions.[1] Recently a long and full account of the ceremonial has been published in Santali, and this account comes from the same area but does not include a description of an actual observance.[2] On the other hand, Mr. C. L. Mukherjea's account of Santal culture to the extreme south in the state of Mayurbhanj[3] omits all

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 132]

[1] P. O. Bodding, *Santali Dictionary*, Vol. I, p. 413.
[2] Stephen H. Murmu, *Karam or Caco Chaṭiar*, Dumka, 1945.
[3] C. L. Mukherjea, *The Santals*, Calcutta, 1943.

St Culshaw M-5 (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42
[The Santal Christian Community]

794
797 able to drive out all evil from amongst us and the work of Jesus Christ will progress.' "

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•533 In some parts of the Santal Church many of the hymns sung are translations of ancient and other Christian hymns set to western melodies, but in this area nearly all the hymns are the product of the community. In the hymnbook now in use[1] there are one hundred and forty hymns, of which one hundred and twenty are original compositions of Christians in the area. Half the remaining twenty have been borrowed from Santali hymnbooks published elsewhere. All these have been set to folk-melodies, and the book is a best seller at markets and fairs through the whole area. The words show clearly the stamp of their environment and at the same time they are full of biblical [539] imagery:

Come, come, merciful Jesus,
Come, come, to the house of my mind.
Seeing Thee, in a moment of time
My mind breaks up.

Life Thou art and Truth,
And the True Way art Thou,
Help of the helpless, Jesus,
That is why I seek Thee.

Among sweet-scented flowers Thou the parrot,
A dark jewel art Thou.
In whose mind Thou art the jewel
He alone is truly rich.[2]

In one hymn Jesus the teacher of the Truth is likened to the bright evening star in the night sky. In another they sing:

[539] The star of morning has risen and shines,
The gentle morning breeze is blowing,
The day of salvation has come to us.[3]

Some of the hymns owe not a little to the fact that the writer knew hymns in Bengali or more remotely in English, but the sentiments have been popularized by being set to Santal melodies. One of the most popular of the evening hymns, set to a [539] haunting melody belonging to the *hephet'* or weeding songs, is

[1] *Dhorom Serrā Puthi*, 3rd ed., Sarenga, 1936.
[2] See Appendix B, No. 28. [3] See Appendix B, No. 29.

St Culshaw M-5 (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42
[The Santal Christian Community]

little more than a translation of the familiar words of "Abide with me":

794
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> The sun has set, O Jesus stay with me,
> I have no other friends but Thee.
>
> Life does not stand, and swiftly it is gone,
> On earth I nothing find but Thee alone.
>
> Nor hardship nor trouble nor death shall I fear
> If Thou grantest mercy and stayest near.
>
> Thy Cross I hold, forgive my sins I pray,
> Give heavenly light, be with me night and day.[1]

Whether the coming of Jesus is thought of as the shining of a bright star in the sky of a dark night or as the light that heralds the approach of dawn and a glorious day, in all circumstances the devotion of the Santal Christian Church is centred in Him as the Light of the world.

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The festivals of the Christian year are becoming landmarks in the lives of the peoples. This is particularly true of the Christmas season. The communal feast when all the Christians eat together on Christmas Day is a natural expression of the spirit that animates the day. Various activities are arranged for the children. The type of celebration followed in the area has been created by the tradition established over a number of years in the central mission station. A Christmas tree is erected in the church and a party held there for the children on Christmas Eve. Originally, the gifts on the tree came from England, but for several years they have been found largely by the local community. Father Christmas is now a familiar figure. The young men of the church remain awake all night and set out soon after midnight to sing carols outside the homes of the members of the community, leaving off when they have completed the round soon after daybreak. A large proportion of full members attend a service of Holy Communion in the morning, but the main body of worshippers gather in large numbers for a service beginning soon after noon. All are dressed in new clothes, and the body of the church, which is bare of furnishings except for sitting-mats, is well filled for a service in which singing predominates. At the close of the service the youths begin a dance in the church, and going out through a side door they dance round the building. On

[1] See Appendix B, No. 30.

St Culshaw M-S (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

when they would sit and eat together. The feast took some time to prepare; the bride's relations—her parents were dead and she was married from the home of a paternal aunt, a blind widow—had provided a goat, but as they were in poor circumstances the Christian villagers had contributed the rice from their homes. While the guests waited for the food there was a good deal of singing, the songs being both traditional and Christian. Here are some examples noted at the time:

Two bows and six arrow shafts I kept in store.
The arrowheads have been sent ahead to *Radha*;[1]
The money also has been sent ahead to *Radha*.[2]

You who should have come yesterday at noon,
Why, sons, did you arrive in the evening?

Three headmen from three villages
Wrangled over the marriage booth;
They did not want to let go the vermilion giving.[3]

The daughter bids farewell and goes;
The house is forlorn, father, the house is forlorn.
The rice in the straw bundle has been pushed out;
Its wooden platform is forlorn, father, its wooden platform is forlorn.[4]

The following song struck a Christian note:

My life (Jesus) and your life,
Two lives (Jesus) are bound together;
Like the *alak* creeper and the *bando*[5] creeper,
Like the spider web in the palmyra tree,
Two lives (Jesus) are bound together.[6]

On this occasion I was unable to remain to witness the final farewell and homegoing, but these follow closely the traditional Santal way.

In the death ceremonies there is little trace of pre-Christian modes of thought. This is not surprising in view of the fact that Christian teaching not only gives a new significance to the individual but also has something definite to say about the destiny of the human soul after death. The difference is emphasized for

[1] The name of the bridegroom's village.
[2] See Appendix B, No. 32.
[3] Two forest creepers.
[4] See Appendix B, No. 31.
[5] See Appendix B, No. 33.
[6] See Appendix B, No. 34.